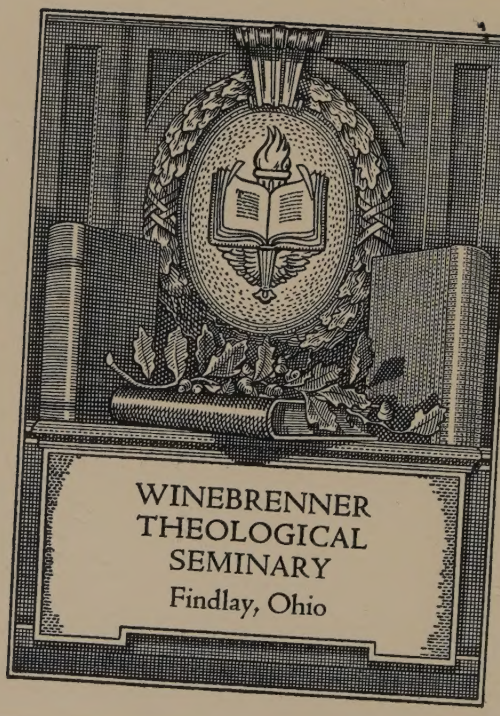
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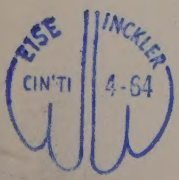

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LIFE OF CHARLES G. FINNEY.

BY

A. M. HILLS,

Author of

"LIFE AND LABORS OF MARY A. WOODBRIDGE," "HOLINESS AND POWER," "PENTECOSTAL LIGHT," "FOOD FOR LAMBS," AND "THE WHOSOEVER GOSPEL."

OFFICE OF "GOD'S REVIVALIST,"
MOUNT OF BLESSINGS,
CINCINNATI, OHIO.

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DEDICATION.

To MY precious son, Charles Finney Hills, whom I named after the blessed servant of Christ, whose life and labors are described in this book, in the fond parental hope that the great soul's loyalty to Jesus and large usefulness might, in a measure, be reproduced in the child, and to all who are seeking a deeper and more conscious acquaintance with our Lord and *the enduement of power* to serve him more effectively,—this book is prayerfully dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

Our sainted publisher, Martin Wells Knapp, three years ago felt impressed to give to the world a "Life of Charles G. Finney," less voluminous than his "Autobiography," less costly than Professor Wright's "Life of Finney," and written by one acquainted with him from the standpoint of holiness. He fixed upon me to be the author, and I accepted the joyful task. Soon after, a still higher Hand thrust upon me the arduous labors of bringing into existence Texas Holiness University, which, for the time, pushed aside all other labors. At the earnest solicitation of the precious brother, I took up the work three months ago, putting into it the few fragments of my spare time. Of course, I have made free use of Finney's "Memoirs" and Professor Wright's "Life" and "Reminiscences," to which I am greatly indebted. I have, however, given an independent picture of the great man's life and work, one not heretofore given.

There were some things which the public ought to know about Finney, which he would never say of himself. There were some things which ought to be said about Finney's work, which none would say who was

not in full sympathy with his deep desire to attain to and to teach sanctification. God has granted to the author at least that one qualification. There is enough in this book quoted from Finney himself to teach any one, desirous of learning, how to be a successful fisher of men, and how to receive the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

It lessens not a little the joy of having written the book that we can not place it in the hands of him who asked it of us.

TEXAS HOLINESS UNIVERSITY,
GREENVILLE, TEXAS. January 21, 1902.

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LIFE OF CHARLES G. FINNEY.

CHAPTER I.

SENT OF GOD.

SOME nineteen hundred years ago, as the greatest Book tells us, "there was a man sent from God, whose name was John." He had a priestly line of ancestors, reaching back fifteen hundred years. His immediate parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, were remarkably devout; for the record says, "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;" and, furthermore, they were both "filled with the Holy Ghost." An angel was sent to foretell the birth of their child, and to give to him the name of John. The angel also declared that the child too "should be filled with the Holy Ghost from birth," and should "be great in the sight of the Lord." It is a wonderful story, and yet is natural, after all, and quite the thing to be expected. Such parents ought to have had a remarkable child; for blood and ancestry will tell.

But here is a more wonderful story still, illustrating in a more striking way God's ample resources to produce great men. About eighteen hundred years

later, August 29, 1792, in Warren, Litchfield County, Connecticut, there was another man sent from God. No angel foretold his birth, nor named him; for he was called "Charles Grandison" Finney, after a character in a novel written by Richardson, with which his parents were better acquainted than with their Bible. But this man, also, was destined to be "filled with the Holy Ghost," and to become "the great preacher of righteousness."

To be sure, one of his ancestors, seven generations back, came over in the *Mayflower*, which makes an illustrious pedigree in Massachusetts; but, to speak as men usually speak, he had no priestly or famous ancestry, none lifted above the common level of humanity. Moreover, his immediate parents, so far from being "righteous" and "blameless" and "filled with the Holy Ghost," were utterly godless. When Finney was twenty-nine years old, he had never heard a word of prayer in his father's house! Evidently no Christian lullabies nor psalms of David ever greeted his childish ears, or soothed to infant slumbers; for he tells us he had never owned a Bible till he bought one to hunt up the passages referred to in his law books. Strange origin this for "the prince of evangelists!" One of God's great surprises—like Martin Luther, the famous Reformer, coming from a peasant-miner's home; and Abraham Lincoln, the greatest President of the world's greatest Republic, coming from a pioneer's log-cabin! Evidently when God wants a really great man, He knows how to produce him and where to find him.

Nor, viewed from a religious standpoint, were his surroundings any more propitious than his home. When Charles was but two years old, his parents

moved into the wilderness of Central New York in Oneida County. "There," he says, "I seldom heard a sermon, unless from some traveling minister, or some miserable holding forth of an ignorant preacher. I remember well how the people would return from meeting, and spend a considerable time in irrepressible laughter at the strange mistakes made and the absurdities which had been advanced."

When Charles reached the age of sixteen, a meeting-house was erected in his neighborhood; but his parents, as if afraid of a sanctuary and Christian civilization, took their family, and made another plunge into the wilderness, going to the extreme eastern end of Lake Ontario, and far to the north, approaching the line of Canada. Here again his life was unblessed by religious privileges.

But the New England emigrants, true to their native instincts, planted their common schools even in the wilderness; and these the boy Charles attended until he was himself able to teach a country school. When he was twenty years old, he returned to Connecticut. He then went to New Jersey, to teach in a German community, returning twice to his native State to continue his studies under a graduate of Yale. He thus taught and studied for six years as best he could, until his teacher informed him that in two years more of private study he could complete the course of study then pursued at Yale.

His teacher invited the earnest young student to go with him to some Southern State and open an academy. He was inclined to accept the proposal; but his parents, hearing of it, immediately came after him and persuaded him to go home with them to Jefferson County, New York. This was in 1818, when Finney

was twenty-six. After making his parents a visit, he concluded to enter, as a student, the law office of Mr. Wright, in the town of Adams, of that county.

He afterward wrote: "Up to this time I had never enjoyed what might be called religious privileges. I had never lived in a praying community, except during the periods when I was attending the high school in New England; and the religion in that place was of a type not at all calculated to arrest my attention. The preaching was by an aged clergyman, an excellent man, and greatly beloved and venerated by his people; but he read his sermons, written probably many years before, in a manner that left no impression on my mind. His reading was altogether unimpassioned and monotonous; and, although the people attended very closely and reverentially to his reading, it seemed to be always a matter of curiosity what he was aiming at, especially if there was anything more in his sermon than a dry discussion of doctrine. Any one can judge whether such preaching was calculated to instruct or interest a young man who neither knew nor cared anything about religion.

"When I was in New Jersey, the preaching in the neighborhood was chiefly in German. I do not think I heard half a dozen sermons in English during my whole stay in New Jersey, which was about three years. Thus, when I went to Adams to study law, I was almost as ignorant of religion as a heathen. I had been brought up mostly in the woods. I had very little regard for the Sabbath, and had no definite knowledge of religious truth. At Adams, for the first time, I sat statedly for a length of time under an educated ministry. . . . I had never, until this time, lived where I could attend a stated prayer-meeting. As

one was held by the Church near our office every week, I used to attend and listen to the prayers as often as I could be excused from business at that hour."

He found the old authors in his law books frequently quoting from the Scriptures. This excited his curiosity so much that he purchased a Bible, *the first that he had ever owned*, and hunted up every passage referred to. This led to careful reading and much meditation upon the Sacred Word. Here follow two facts that are profoundly important to all Churches and Christians, and especially to all who would ever be successful soul-winners. His pastor's name was Rev. George W. Gale, a graduate of Princeton College and Theological Seminary. His theology was hyper-Calvinistic—the genuine Calvinism taught at that time in Princeton, and, we might add, so much of the time since. He believed that man's nature was so totally sinful that he was utterly incapable of any good; the will was incapable of a right choice; the soul was utterly passive in regeneration; "there was no adaptation in the gospel to change his nature, and consequently no connection in religion between means and ends." "This Brother Gale sternly held; and consequently, in his preaching, he never seemed to expect, nor did he even aim at converting anybody by any sermon that I ever heard him preach. And yet he was an able preacher, as preaching was then estimated. The fact is, these dogmas were a perfect strait-jacket to him. If he preached repentance, he must be sure, before he sat down, to leave the impression on his people that *they could not repent*. If he called them to believe, he must be sure to inform them that, until their nature was changed by the Holy Spirit, *faith was impossible to them*. And so his orthodoxy was a perfect snare

to himself and to his hearers." (Memoirs of C. G. Finney, pp. 59, 60.)

The pastor was in the habit of dropping into the young lawyer's office to see what impression his sermons had made on the lawyer's mind. Finney was at this time leader of his choir, and of course their relations were familiar. With the keen, subtle, intellectual acumen which characterized him and a frankness bordering on to impolite bluntness, and probably with a touch of cynical irreverence, the lawyer satisfied the minister's curiosity completely; for fifty years afterward he wrote: "I now think that I criticised his sermons unmercifully. . . . Indeed, I found it impossible to attach any meaning to the terms which he used with great formality and frequency. What did he mean by repentance? Was it a mere feeling of sorrow for sin? Was it altogether a passive state of mind, or did it involve a voluntary element? If it was a change of mind, in what sense was it a change of mind? What did he mean by the term 'regeneration?' What did such language mean when applied to a spiritual change? What did he mean by faith? Was it merely an intellectual state? Was it merely a conviction or persuasion that the things stated in the gospel were true? What did he mean by sanctification? Did it involve any physical change in the subject, or any physical influence on the part of God? I could not tell; neither did he seem to know himself. I sometimes told him that he seemed to begin in the middle of his discourse, and to assume many things which, to my mind, needed to be proved. I must say, I was rather perplexed than edified by his preaching." (Memoirs, pp. 7, 8.)

As one reads such words, one can not help wondering how many ministers now are as vague and

misty as was Rev. Gale, and how many multitudes are still sitting in the pews and wondering what the ministers are talking about. Neither can one help reflecting that, with such a theology prevailing, it is little wonder that infidelity was widespread at the beginning of the century, and revivals were few, with seldom a conversion, and that only one in fourteen of the population of this country was even a professor of religion! Everybody was told that they were absolutely helpless, and could do nothing to secure their own repentance or conversion; and they generally believed it. With one accord they were idly waiting, in imaginary helplessness, for a sovereign God to enable them to repent and believe; and thus whole generations were sweeping into hell. What appalling results can flow from a false theology!

The other striking fact was this: Finney read a great deal in his Bible about prayer and answers to prayer and prayer promises; and yet he continually heard people pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and as often confess that they did not receive what they asked for. He heard them exhort each other to wake up and be engaged and pray earnestly for a revival of religion, professing that, if they were in earnest, they would have a revival, and the impenitent would be converted; but they would as continually bemoan their coldness and complain that they were making no progress. He says: "This inconsistency, the fact that they prayed so much and were not answered, was a sad stumbling-block to me." "On one occasion, when I was in one of the prayer-meetings, I was asked if I did not desire that they should pray for me. I told them, 'No,' because I did not see that God answered their prayers. I said: 'I suppose that I need to be prayed for—for I am conscious that I

am a sinner—but I do not see that it will do any good for you to pray for me; for you are continually asking, but do not receive. You have been praying for a revival of religion ever since I have been in Adams [three years], and yet you have it not. You have prayed enough since I have attended these meetings to have prayed the devil out of Adams, if there is any virtue in your prayers. But here you are, praying on and complaining still.'" (Memoirs, p. 10.)

Some young people proposed to pray for Finney, among them the noble young woman who afterward became his wife. But the hopeless pastor remarked that it would do no good; he did not believe that Finney would ever be converted, since he had already sinned against so much light that his heart was hopelessly hardened! And what was the more, the choir was so much under Finney's influence that it was doubtful if they would ever be converted while their leader remained in Adams. Fortunately for the kingdom of God, some one had more faith than the pastor, and laid hold of God for Finney's conversion. To use his own words, he became "very restless." A little reflection showed him that he was by no means in a state of mind to go to heaven, if he should die. He began to feel that there was something in religion of infinite importance, and that, if the soul was immortal, he needed a great change to be prepared for happiness in heaven. The great soul was approaching his Bethel: he was standing face to face with God, and confronting the decisive question whether he would accept Christ as presented in the gospel, or pursue a worldly course of life. Prayers were being answered at last; for God had his hook in Finney's jaw, and was pulling with the mighty cord of Infinite Love.

CHAPTER II.

HIS CONVERSION.

On a Sabbath evening in early October, 1821, when Finney was past twenty-nine years old, he deliberately made up his mind that he would settle the question of his soul's salvation at once, and, if it were possible, would make his peace with God. On Monday and Tuesday he was not much occupied, and read his Bible, and engaged in prayer most of the time. But when he began to seek God in real earnest, it developed that he was very proud without knowing it. He became ashamed to let any one know of his seriousness. He stopped up the key-holes of his room and office, and only whispered his prayer, ashamed to have it said of him, as of Saul, "Behold, he prayeth!" Before that time his Bible had laid openly on the table in his office among his law books; now, from wicked shame, he hid it from the sight of others. Like other convicted sinners, he resorted to the familiar device of hiding away from his pastor and all others who might have the slightest concern in his salvation. The wicked cowardice of a guilty sinner! Tuesday night the conviction was so great that he thought he should die; and he knew, if he did, that he would sink down to hell. Wednesday morning an inward voice seemed to say to him: "What are you waiting for? Did you not promise to give your heart to God? And what

are you trying to do? Are you endeavoring to work out a righteousness of your own?"

He had started for his office, and was in the street, when the voice spoke to him. "Just at this point," he says, "the whole plan of salvation opened to my mind in a most wonderful manner. I saw the atonement of Christ was a finished work as clearly as I ever saw it in my life. Gospel salvation seemed to me to be the offer of something to be accepted, and that it was full and complete, and that all that was necessary on my part was to get my own consent to give up my sins and accept Christ." "I had stopped in the street, where the inward voice seemed to arrest me. How long I remained in that position, I can not say; but, after this distinct revelation had stood for some time before my mind, the question was put, 'Will you accept it *now*, TO-DAY?' I replied, 'I will accept it to-day, or I will die in the attempt.'" He started for the woods to pray; but again his pride appeared, and he found himself skulking along under the fence, for fear some one might see him. As he entered the woods, he said, "I will give my heart to God, or I will never come down from there."

A quarter of a mile in the woods he crept into a covert where great trees had fallen across each other, making a closet for him. He thought that he could be alone where he might pray freely and not be overheard! But lo! when he came to try, he was dumb; he had nothing to say to God! He found himself fast verging to despair, and he cried, "My heart is dead to God, and will not pray!"

He thought several times he heard a noise, and he stopped to listen and see if any one was overhearing him. Then and there the senseless, wicked pride of his

heart was revealed to him. "An overwhelming sense of the wickedness of being ashamed to have a human being see me on my knees before God took powerful possession of me. The sin appeared awful, infinite! 'What!' I said, 'such a degraded sinner as I am, on my knees, confessing my sins to a great and holy God, and ashamed to have any human being, and a sinner like myself, find me on my knees, endeavoring to make my peace with an offended God!' It broke me down before the Lord. I cried at the top of my voice that I would not leave that place if all the men on earth and all the devils in hell surrounded me." Then his heart was melted, and his tongue was loosed, and he could pray.

The Spirit brought a promise to his mind: "Then shall ye go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. Then shall ye seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for me with all your heart." He seized upon the heavenly promise with the grasp of a drowning man, and cried, "Lord, I take Thee at Thy word!"

He continued thus to pray and appropriate promises for a long time, until he found himself tripping through the bushes on the way to the road, and saying, "If ever I am converted, I will preach the gospel." In his ignorance he did not realize that peace with God had come, and he was already converted.

He reached the village, and found that it was noon. He had spent the whole forenoon with God. Such a wonderful quiet and peace had come to his soul; all sense of sin and all consciousness of guilt had so completely departed, and his repose of mind was so unspeakably great that he thought he must have grieved the Holy Spirit entirely away. But no burden came back. And when, after dinner, he took down his bass-

viol and began to sing a sacred hymn, his whole heart melted before God, and he began to weep.

And now began the spiritual wonders of this wonderful life. Night came on. Squire Wright bade him good-night, and went home. He built a fire in the front room of his office, and went to the back room to pray. He says:

"There was neither light nor fire in the room; nevertheless it suddenly appeared perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seems as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It did not occur to me at the time, nor for some time afterward, that it was wholly a mental state. I have always since regarded this as a most remarkable state of mind; for it seemed to me a reality that He stood before me, and I fell down at His feet, and poured out my soul to Him. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed His feet with my tears. I must have continued in that state a good while, absorbed with the interview. I returned to the front office, and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burned out. But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism with the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression like a wave of electricity going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love. It seemed like the very breath of God.

"No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart. These waves came over me and over me and over me, until I cried out: 'I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me. Lord, I can not bear any more!'"

The next morning these marvelous experiences were repeated, till he was overwhelmed with the baptism, with the Spirit, and with the resulting emotions. He wept aloud, and poured out his soul to God.

I question if there is a parallel to this in all the literature of the saints—a man receiving such a baptism with the Spirit so soon after conversion, without asking for it or expecting it, and when he was too utterly ignorant of the whole subject to even think about it. In this instance God seems to have stepped beyond the bounds of His ordinary method of conferring the great gift. Finney was the instrument God wanted, and He used His sovereign right to deal with him spiritually after an unusual manner, and equip him at once for a matchless service.

A member of the choir came into the office late that Wednesday evening, after the Spirit came, and he found Finney weeping aloud, and said: "Mr. Finney, what ails you? Are you in pain?" "No, but so happy that I can not live." He hurried out, and brought in an elder of the Church, to whom Finney began to tell his experience. Another man, who was fitting for college, stepped into the office, and was listening, when, suddenly, he fell to the floor, and cried out in the greatest agony of mind, "Do pray for me!" and he was soon converted. The next morning, when Squire Wright came into the office, Finney said a few

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words to him about his soul. He dropped his head, stood in silence a moment, and left the office. The words of the young convert, Spirit-filled, had pierced him like a sword, and he did not get over it until he was converted. Finney sallied out to talk with anybody he chanced to meet. He entered the shop of a pious shoemaker, and found there a young man, son of an elder of the Church, defending Universalism. The Lord at once gave Finney an answer to his arguments. He rose up in silence, left the shop, and broke for the woods, and there gave himself to God. He spoke to many others that day, and the Spirit drove the message home, and every one was converted. In the evening he sat down to the teatable, and was requested to ask the blessing. There were present at the table with the Christians an unconverted young woman and a young man who was a professed Universalist and a whisky-distiller. He had scarcely begun when their spiritual condition so excited his compassion that he began to weep. They sat in silence a moment, when the young distiller rushed from the table, and locked himself in his room; and he was not seen again until he came out a Christian the next morning. He afterward became an able minister of the gospel. That evening the people, who had heard about Finney's conversion, went without appointment, but by common consent, to the church. It seems that Finney had been a leaning-post for the stout sinners of the town. A Mr. C—— had repeatedly said to his pious wife: "If religion is true, why don't you convert Finney? If you Christians can convert Finney, I will believe in religion." Old lawyer M——, when he heard that Finney was converted, said: "It 's all a hoax. He is simply trying to see what he can make Christian people be-

lieve." Both of these men were in the church that night, and the house was packed.

The minister was there also; but neither he nor any one else ventured to lead the meeting. Finney went in, saw the situation, and went forward, and, like a convert of the first century, began to give his testimony. Not more preaching, but more experience and more testimony is probably the need of the hour. What the Lord enabled Finney to say was so used of the Lord that C—— rose up, pressed his way through the crowd, and went home, in his excitement leaving his hat. Old lawyer M—— also left, and went home, saying: "Finney is in earnest; there is no mistake; but he is clearly deranged."

The cultured pastor, who had discouraged the people from praying for Finney, arose and made a humble confession. He then called upon Finney to lead the meeting in prayer, who then and there offered the first public prayer of his life.

I pause in this thrilling story to call attention to the fact that this cultured pastor, with all his college and seminary training, long after this confessed that he had never knowingly led a soul to Christ; while this young man, not college-bred, within twenty-four hours after he was baptized with the Spirit, and thirty-six hours after his conversion, had seen many converts, and had been used by God to launch a full-fledged revival upon a whole town—a revival, as we shall see, that did not stop until it had swept through nearly the entire county.

I am writing these lines in a large university town, and almost under the shadow of a theological seminary (Oberlin). I saw a baker's dozen of their theological graduates this afternoon. I was told by one of the

seminary students this morning that nothing was made here of the power of the Holy Ghost. If this is true, it will account for the fact that four weeks of revival effort this season, as I have been frequently told, was a most humiliating failure. Several ministers, an evangelist, a college Faculty, two great Churches, hundreds of Christian students, and a theological seminary—all of them together unequal to a revival!

I believe it is a truth well-nigh, if not absolutely, universal, that, whenever a revival effort is abortive, something is wrong in Zion. Whenever sinners are not being saved and believers sanctified, there is a lack of Holy Spirit power. When will our theological professors and our ministers learn the all-important lesson so illustrated in the Acts of the Apostles and so verified by all the ages, that the chief factor in ministerial success is the Pentecostal experience, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, the being "filled with the Spirit?"

Finney held a meeting each evening, and gave himself to the work of saving souls, especially turning his attention to the young people, in whose way he had stood. Soon all but one of the young people with whom he associated were converted. He afterward visited his parents. His father met him at the gate, and said, "How do you do, Charles?" The instant reply was: "I am well, father, body and soul. But, father, you are an old man. All of your children have grown up, and have left your house; and I never heard a prayer in my father's house." The father dropped his head, burst into tears, and replied: "I know it, Charles. Come in and pray yourself." The father and mother were greatly moved, and were soon converted.

Finney remained in the town two or three days, talking with everybody he met about the one great theme. Within a week a meeting was called in that town, and the Spirit of God was poured out so mightily that the people, having knelt to pray, could not rise from their knees. "The work spread in every direction all over that town. And thus it spread at that time, from Adams as a center, throughout nearly all the towns in the county."

During the winter that followed, a daily morning prayer-meeting before the dawn of day was held. The zeal of the Lord's house fairly consumed Finney to such a degree that he lost desire for food or sleep. He had also frequent visions, when the glory of the Lord shone round about him in a manner that was marvelous, like the brightness of the sun. He was amazed that others did not see what he saw, and feel as he felt. He tried to tell others; but he soon found that he could make none understand, and that it would not do to tell the brethren what was passing between the Lord and his soul.

The business of law also, which had formerly been most attractive, soon appeared "odious and offensive" to him. The Christlike passion for souls was aroused in him, which swallowed up all other pursuits, and remained dominant through life.

He also learned, during that first winter of Christian experience, what most of us never learn, what it is to have travail of soul in prayer. He was sometimes loaded down with agony, until he felt as if he would stagger under the burden that was on his mind, and he could only pray in groans and tears. This made him an Israel, a prevailing prince with God in prayer.

CHAPTER III.

STUDYING THEOLOGY.

MOSES was called of God to lead Israel out of bondage; then he was led into the wilderness, to be trained and fitted by God. In like manner Saul of Tarsus was first converted, and then led out into the Arabian desert to "Brush College," of which Moses was an alumnus, there, like him, to be taught of God. Finney had a somewhat similar experience. Says one of his biographers (G. Frederick Wright, D. D., LL. D.): "About as much mystery hangs over the first year and a half of Finney's life, subsequent to his conversion, as that which shrouds the corresponding period of the renewed life of the apostle Paul." We have already briefly noticed about all he has recorded of those days; viz.: daily morning and evening meetings, much fasting and prayer, visions of God too sacred to make public, a visit to his parents, and a revival that covered much of the county. What particular part he had in it is recorded in heaven and well-known there, but not on earth.

"It was not till the 25th of June, 1823, that he was formally taken under the care of the Presbytery with reference to entering the ministry." But even here the hand of God was leading him in a way almost as wonderful as in the matter of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. He was being kept and fitted for an exceptional work, and was preserved from intellectual and

spiritual detriment by an unseen hand. He tells it in his own peculiar way, as follows:

"Some of the ministers urged me to go to Princeton to study theology; but I declined. When they asked me why I would not go to Princeton, I told them that my pecuniary circumstances forbade it. This was true; but they said they would see that my expenses were paid. Still I refused to go; and, when urged to give my reasons, I plainly told them that I would not put myself under such an influence as they had been under; that I was confident they had been wrongly educated, and they were not ministers that met my ideal of what a minister of Christ should be. I told them this reluctantly, but I could not honestly withhold it. They appointed my pastor to superintend my studies. He offered me the use of his library, and said he would give what attention I needed to my theological studies."

In all human probability Finney would have been spoiled as an evangelist and utterly ruined as a great preacher of righteousness had he been educated at Princeton. Equally fatal would it have been to have accepted the opinions and views of the pastor (Rev. Mr. Gale), to whose instruction the Presbytery committed him. He says:

"My studies, so far as he was concerned as my teacher, were little else than controversy. He held to the Old School doctrine of original sin, or that the human constitution was morally depraved. He held, also, that men were utterly unable to comply with the terms of the gospel, to repent, to believe, or to do anything that God required them to do; that while they were free to do all evil, in the sense of being able to commit any amount of sin, yet they were not free

to perform any good; that God had condemned men for their sinful nature; and for this, as well as for their transgressions, they deserved eternal death.

"He held, also, that the influences of the Spirit of God on the minds of men were physical, acting directly upon the substance of the soul; that men were passive in regeneration; and, in short, he held all those doctrines that logically flow from the fact of a nature sinful in itself.

"These doctrines I could not receive. I could not accept his views on the subject of atonement, regeneration, faith, repentance, the slavery of the will, or any of the kindred doctrines. But of these views he was quite tenacious; and he seemed sometimes not a little impatient because I did not receive them without a question.

"He held that Jesus suffered for the elect the literal penalty of the Divine law; that He suffered just what was due to each of the elect on the score of *retributive justice*. I objected that this was absurd; as in that case He suffered the equivalent of endless misery multiplied by the whole number of the elect. He insisted that this was true. He affirmed that Jesus literally paid the debt of the elect and fully satisfied retributive justice. On the contrary, it seemed to me that Jesus only satisfied public justice, and that this was all that the government of God could require.

"I was, however, but a child in theology, and a novice in religion and in Biblical learning; but I thought he did not sustain his views from the Bible, and told him so. He was alarmed, I dare say, at what appeared to him to be my obstinacy. I thought that my Bible clearly taught that the atonement was made for all men. He limited it to a part. I could not accept

his view, for I could not see that he fairly proved it from the Bible. His rules of interpretation did not meet my views. They were much less definite and intelligible than those to which I had been accustomed in my law studies. To the objections which I urged he could make no satisfactory reply. I asked him if the Bible did not require all who hear the gospel to repent, believe the gospel, and be saved. He admitted that it did require all to believe and be saved; but how could they believe and accept a salvation that was not provided for them? I could not receive that THEOLOGICAL FICTION OF IMPUTATION. I will state, as nearly as I can, the exact ground that he maintained and insisted upon:

"First. He maintained that the guilt of Adam's first transgression is literally imputed to all his posterity; so that they are justly sentenced and exposed to eternal damnation for Adam's sin.

"Secondly. He maintained that we received from Adam, by natural generation, a nature wholly sinful and morally corrupt in every faculty of soul and body; so that we are totally unable to perform any act acceptable to God, and are necessitated by our sinful nature to transgress His law in every action of our lives. And this, he insisted, is the estate into which all men fell by the first sin of Adam. For this sinful nature, thus received from Adam by natural generation, all mankind are also sentenced to, and are deserving of eternal damnation.

"Thirdly. Then, in addition to this, he maintained that we are all justly condemned and sentenced to eternal damnation FOR OUR OWN UNAVOIDABLE TRANSGRESSION of the law. Thus he held that all humanity were justly subject to a triple eternal damnation.

"Then the second branch of this wonderful imputation theory is as follows: The sin of all the *elect*, both original and actual—that is, the guilt of Adam's sin, together with the guilt of their sinful nature, and also the guilt of their personal transgressions—are all literally imputed to Christ; and therefore the Divine government regarded Him as an embodiment of all the sins and guilt of the elect, and treated Him accordingly; that is, the Father punished the Son precisely as much as all the elect deserved. Hence, their debt being fully discharged by the punishment of Christ, they are saved upon principles of 'exact justice.'

"The third branch of this wonderful theological fiction is as follows:

"First. The obedience of Christ to the Divine law is literally imputed to the elect; so that in Him they are regarded as having always perfectly obeyed the law.

"Secondly. His death for them is also imputed to the elect; so that in Him they are regarded as having fully suffered all that they deserve on account of the guilt of Adam's sin imputed to them, and on account of their sinful nature, and also on account of all their personal transgressions.

"Thirdly. Thus by their surety the elect have first perfectly obeyed the law; and then they have in Him suffered the full penalty of the law. They have suffered in Him as if they had not obeyed in Him. Then, after the law has been doubly satisfied, the elect are required to repent and believe as if no satisfaction had been rendered; and then, payment in full having been rendered twice over, the discharge of the elect is claimed to be an act of *infinite grace*. Thus the elect are saved by grace on principles of justice, so

that there is strictly no grace or mercy in our forgiveness. It follows that the elect may demand their discharge on the score of strict justice. They need not pray for pardon or forgiveness; it is all a mistake to do so. This inference is my own; but it follows irresistibly, from what the 'Confession of Faith' itself asserts, that the elect are saved on principles of exact and perfect justice.

"I could not but regard and treat this whole question of imputation as a theological fiction. As soon as I learned what were the unambiguous teachings of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith upon these points, I did not hesitate on all suitable occasions to declare my dissent from them. I repudiated and exposed them.

"I found it impossible to agree with Mr. Gale on these points. He did not pretend that they were rational, or that they would bear reasoning upon. Hence he insisted that my reasoning would lead me into infidelity. But I insisted that our reason was given us for the very purpose of enabling us to justify the ways of God, and that no such fiction of imputation could by any possibility be true." (Memoirs, pp. 46, 50, 56-59.)

Is it any wonder that the healthy mind of Finney, so rich in common sense and so "filled with the Spirit," and so entirely void of any theological bias or preconceived opinions, should revolt at this mass of theological rubbish and inconsistency? God mercifully and providentially saved him from accepting a theology that would have made his great usefulness utterly impossible. He was destined to "reason with men" of "sin, righteousness, and judgment." He could not have done it without a theology which commended itself to

the right reason of men, and with which he could charge home on the conscience.

"I had been used," he says, "to the close and logical reasonings of the judges, as I found them reported in our law books; but when I went to Mr. Gale's Old School library, I found almost nothing proved to my satisfaction. I am sure it was not because I was opposed to the truth; but I was dissatisfied because the positions of these theological authors were unsound and not satisfactorily sustained. They often seemed to state one thing and prove another, and often to fall short of proving anything.

"I finally said to Mr. Gale, 'If there is nothing better than I find in your library to sustain the great doctrines taught by our Church, I must be an infidel;' and I have always believed that, had not the Lord led me to see the fallacy of those arguments, and to see the real truth as presented in the Scriptures, especially had He not so revealed Himself to me personally that I could not doubt the truth of the Christian religion, I should have been forced to be an infidel." (Page 53.)

"I often said to Mr. Gale, 'Your positions are not proved; they are unsusceptible of proof.' But he would insist upon it that I ought to defer to the opinions of the great and good men who, after much consultation and deliberation, had come to those conclusions; that is was unbecoming in me, a young man bred to the profession of law, and having no theological education, to oppose my views to those of the great men and profound theologians whose opinions I found in his library. He urged that, if I persisted in having my intelligence satisfied on those points with arguments, I should become an infidel. He believed that the decisions of the Church ought to be respected by a young man like

myself, and that I should surrender my own judgment to that of others of superior wisdom." (Pages 53-54.)

This was the old, old argument that has been hurled at the head of every young man through all the ages who dared to think for himself,—"You are young and foolish; how dare you reject the opinion of the learned, and disagree with the holy fathers?" What a hard time God has to find a man who will get out of the ruts of thought, and be honest in mind, willing to be taught by Him! And how long and wearily a suffering world must wait for a Copernicus, a Bacon, a Luther, an Arminius, a Wesley, a Finney! What an array of learned names can be marshaled in support of every damnable error that was ever advanced in theology! And how men hide behind them! May God give to the young men of America a fresh vision of truth!

Finney paid his respects to the Presbyterian Confession—that document that has been such a check on the progress and such a hindrance to the best thought and piety of that great Church—in the following words: "When I came to read the Confession of Faith, and saw the passages that were quoted to sustain their peculiar positions, I was absolutely ashamed of it. I could not feel any respect for a document that would undertake to impose on mankind such dogmas as those, sustained, for the most part, by passages of Scripture that were totally irrelevant, and not in a single instance sustained by passages which, in a court of law, would have been considered at all conclusive." (Page 60.)

It is easy to see that this must have been a period of great and peculiar trial to Mr. Finney. He was a thoughtful man, more than ordinarily sensitive and humble. He had that teachable modesty and humility that a baptism with the Holy Ghost brings to the heart

Moreover, no great soul can break with the past without serious misgivings and struggles. Luther went through Gethsemanes of anguish before he could bring himself to the point of forsaking and opposing his Church mother. All the great men who have marked out new paths for others have had their hours of anguish. Finney was no exception. He says: "I would often come from Mr. Gale's study greatly depressed and discouraged, saying to myself: 'I can not embrace these views, come what will. I can not believe they are taught in the Bible.' Several times I was on the point of giving up the study for the ministry altogether."

There were two things that kept him both from despair and a fatal theology. "Often," he says, "when I left Mr. Gale, I would go to my room and spend a long time on my knees over my Bible. Indeed, I read my Bible a great deal on my knees during those days of conflict, beseeching the Lord to teach me His own mind on those points. I had nowhere to go but directly to the Bible and to the philosophy of the working of my own mind, as revealed in consciousness." (Page 54.)

And God sent him a human helper. "There was," he writes, "but one member of the Church to whom I opened my mind freely on this subject; and that was Elder H——, a very godly, praying man. He had been educated in Princeton views, and held pretty strongly the higher doctrines of Calvinism. Nevertheless, as we had frequent and protracted conversations, he became satisfied that I was right; and he would call on me frequently to have some seasons of prayer with me, to strengthen me in my studies, and in my discussions with Mr. Gale, and to decide me more and

more firmly that, come what would, I would preach the gospel. Sometimes we would continue till a late hour at night crying to God for light and strength, and for faith to accept and do His perfect will. He lived more than three miles from the village, and frequently he has staid with me until ten or eleven o'clock at night, and then walked home. The dear old man! I have reason to believe that he prayed for me daily as long as he lived.

"After I got into the ministry, and great opposition was raised to my preaching, he said to me, 'O, my soul is so burdened that I pray for you day and night! But I am sure that God will help you. Go on, go on, Brother Finney; the Lord will give you deliverance.'"

The Lord sent an angel to comfort his Son in his hour of anguish; He sent this dear saint to gird Finney with courage and strength. So he rose above discouragement, and was made superior to depression, and victorious over unwise criticism and worse instruction. He got a theology forged on the anvil of prayer, drawn from the Bible, the fountain of truth, with the Holy Ghost for his theological Instructor, as he knelt above the sacred page before God. There never was, and there never will be, a better way to study theology. It made Finney an independent, reverent, Spirit-taught, Bible-filled giant in theology. It prepared a mailed warrior for the pulpit, able to hew down the Agags and Anaks of sin, and to slay right and left the enemies of God.

Equally unwise and impractical was Mr. Gale's homiletical instruction to Mr. Finney. He prophesied, with respect to his views, every kind of evil. He assured him that the Spirit of God would not approve and co-operate with his labors; that if he addressed

men, as he told him he intended to, they would not hear him; that if they came for a short time, they would soon become offended, and his congregation would all fall off; and that, unless he wrote his sermons, he would immediately become stale and uninteresting, and could not satisfy the people; and that he would divide and scatter instead of building up the congregation, wherever he preached. "Indeed," says Finney, "I found his views to be almost the reverse of those which I entertained on all such practical questions relating to my duty as a minister."

"I do not wonder, and did not at the time, that he was shocked at my views and purposes with regard to preaching the gospel. With his education it could not be otherwise. He followed out his views with very little practical result. *I pursued mine, and, by the blessing of God, the results were the opposite of those which he predicted.* When this fact came out clearly, it completely upset his theological and practical ideas as a minister, and for a time annihilated his hope as a Christian, and finally made him quite another man, as a minister." (Page 55.)

Here, in his Memoirs, Mr. Finney makes another comment on Mr. Gale's deficiency, and pauses also to make a general observation which it would be an infinite blessing to the Church of Christ for theological professors and ministers to heed.

"There was another defect in Brother Gale's education which I regarded as fundamental. He had failed to receive that Divine anointing of the Holy Ghost that would make him a power in the pulpit and in society for the conversion of souls. He had fallen short of receiving the baptism with the Holy Ghost which is indispensable to ministerial success. When Christ

commissioned His apostles to go and preach, He told them to abide at Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high. This was an indispensable qualification for success in their ministry. The baptism was a Divine purifying, an anointing, bestowing on them a Divine illumination, filling them with faith and love, with peace and power, so that their words were made sharp in the hearts of God's enemies, quick and powerful, like a two-edged sword. This is an indispensable qualification of a successful ministry; and I have often been surprised and pained that, to this day, so little stress is laid upon this qualification for preaching Christ to a sinful world. Without the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit, a man will never make much progress in preaching the gospel.

"Mr. Gale was a sincere and good man; but he was sadly defective in his education, theologically, philosophically, and practically. I have said what I have of him because I think it applicable to many of the ministers even of the present day. I think that their practical views of preaching the gospel, whatever their theological views may be, are very defective indeed, and that their want of unction, and of the power of the Holy Ghost, is a radical defect in their preparation for the ministry. This is a fact which has long been settled in my mind, and over which I have long had occasion to mourn; and as I have become more and more acquainted with the ministry in this and other countries, I am persuaded that, with all their training and discipline and education, there is a lack in practical views of the best way of presenting the gospel to men, and especially in their want of the power of the Holy Ghost." (Pages 55, 56.)

At length this strange theological course, consist-

ing of opposing continually the human teacher, and sitting humbly at the feet of the Divine, was ended. Finney came before the Presbytery, and was licensed to preach by a unanimous vote. Doubtless, as his biographer Wright asserts, the Presbytery was actuated by no love of his doctrines, but rather from "general considerations of policy, and from fear of being found fighting against God," or one whom God so wondrously used.

According to the prescribed custom, he presented to the Presbytery two written sermons, which probably, with a single exception, were the only ones he ever prepared. The third he wrote to put down a criticism that he was unequal to writing a creditable sermon. But he was hampered in the delivery of it, and shoved his manuscript under the pulpit, and then launched forth with his accustomed freedom in extemporaneous address. Mr. Finney was a licensed preacher at last.

The next Sabbath he preached for Mr. Gale, and when he came out of the pulpit his teacher said to him, "Mr. Finney, I shall be very much ashamed to have it known, wherever you go, that you studied theology with me." It was one more shaft from Satan to discourage Finney from preaching his mighty, soul-winning gospel.

Be it said to Mr. Gale's credit that he afterward blessed the Lord that, in all his discussions with his great pupil, and in all he had said to him, he had not had the least influence to change his views. He frankly confessed his error in the manner of dealing with him, and admitted that, if Finney had listened to him, he would have been ruined as a minister. O, what multitudes of preachers have no such happy escape from bad theology and impractical training! What vast num-

bers have had the fire of enthusiasm and oratory extinguished by the criticism of the schools, and go to their work loaded down with what the mother of the Wesleys called "useless knowledge," while utterly unfitted for practical work by theories and notions that will cramp their energies and hinder their usefulness while they live!

It only remains to mention some of the personal characteristics of Finney which enhanced his usefulness. First, God gave him one of the most valuable physical qualifications of a great orator—a majestic and commanding presence. He was six feet in stature, with a stately and imposing frame, a piercing, eagle eye, and a most kingly mien. "He had a voice of rare clearness, compass, and flexibility," which he used in a most natural and forcible way. "He was entirely free from mannerism; his intonation and emphasis were perfect;" and his voice and face and action were always in harmony with whatever great thought or feeling he was aiming to express. His grace of movement was always manifest, and his unstudied gestures were the perfection of grace. One might have supposed that he had spent years with the masters of elocution and with the leaders of dramatic art. His mind was subtle and keen, and the great Dr. Charles Hodge called his logic "relentless." He had that rare balance of faculties, great reasoning powers with a quick and ready imagination, a stern loyalty to duty and obligation, and a divine compassion for the erring. He could thunder the terrors of the law with appalling power, and then turn and offer the mercy of the gospel with the tenderness and tears of Jeremiah or Christ. His command of language was ready, his vocabulary copious, and his diction fine. He was scrupulously neat in his person,

and gentlemanly in all his instincts. After thirty years of life on the platform in many States, and meeting and mingling with men of wide fame as preachers and orators, our mind goes back to the college days when we heard Finney, and felt again and again the thrill of his overpowering eloquence. We thought him then to be the prince of preachers and evangelists; a judgment we have never reversed. He was, like Elijah and John Baptist, a man of nature and of the desert, unspoiled by society, and untrammeled by the opinions and regulations of the schools, but taught of God and filled with the Holy Ghost. God had his giant at last.

CHAPTER IV.

BEGINNING HIS MINISTRY.

Probably no minister ever went into his work with less expectation of dazzling success and fame than Finney had. He wrote: "Having had no regular training for the ministry, I did not expect or desire to labor in large towns or cities, or minister to cultivated congregations. I intended to go into the new settlements, and preach in schoolhouses and barns and groves, as best I could. Accordingly, soon after being licensed to preach, I took a commission for six months from a female missionary society located in Oneida County. I went into Jefferson County, and began my labors at Evans' Mills."

The people were much interested, and thronged the place to hear him preach. They extolled his pulpits efforts, and the little Congregational Church, that had no preacher, became very hopeful that they should be built up with a revival. More or less convictions occurred under every sermon for some weeks; but there were no conversions, and no general conviction seized the public mind. Then, with that keen discernment of conditions and wise means that always characterized his work to the very close of his life, he put forth a master stroke that precipitated results. He told his audience one evening that they highly complimented his preaching; but that he did not come there to please

them, but to bring them to repentance; that it mattered not to him how well they were pleased with his preaching, if, after all, they rejected his Master; that they were getting no good from his work, and he could not spend his time with them unless they were going to receive the gospel. He then quoted the words of Abraham's servant, "Now will ye deal kindly and truly with my Master? If you will, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left." He turned this question over, and pressed it upon them until they understood it. He then said to them: "Now I must know your minds, and I want all of you who will give your pledge to make your peace with God immediately, to rise up; but all of you who are resolved not to become Christians, and wish me to understand so, and Christ to understand so, remain sitting."

"They looked at one another and at me, and all sat still, just as I expected. After looking around upon them for a few moments, I said: 'Then you are committed. You have taken your stand. You have rejected Christ and His gospel; and ye are witnesses one against another, and God is witness against you all. You may remember as long as you live that you have thus publicly committed yourselves against the Savior, and said, "We will not have this man, Christ Jesus, to reign over us."' They were filled with anger, and started *en masse* for the door." He said to them: "I am sorry for you, and will preach to you once more."

All the Christians thought the work was ruined, and hung their heads with chagrin, except one Baptist deacon, who came forward and said: "Brother Finney, you have got them. They can not rest under this, and you will see results." He and Finney arranged to

spend the next day in fasting and prayer, and they poured out their hearts before God, and got the assurance of victory.

Meanwhile the enraged people were going about, cursing, threatening to ride Finney on a rail, to tar and feather him, etc. They said he had put them under oath, and made them swear they would not serve God, and drew them into a solemn and public pledge to reject Christ and His gospel. But they packed the house the next night, and he preached from the text, "Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him: woe to the wicked! it shall be ill with him."

He says: "The Spirit of God came upon me with such power that it was like opening a battery upon them. I took it for granted that they were committed against the Lord, and for an hour and a half the Word of God came through me as a fire and a hammer breaking the rock, and a sword piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

He dismissed the meeting without giving a call to repent. But the truth had done its work. Some could not hold up their heads. A woman was on the floor speechless and helpless, and remained so for sixteen hours, when she came out with the song of salvation upon her lips. All night, people were sending for Finney to pray for them, such was the agony of their conviction. A hotelkeeper, who was a Deist and the center of a group of Deists and infidels, was soon converted. They were banded together to resist the revival. Finney preached a sermon to meet their needs, and this leader and most of his comrades bowed to Jesus. One of them stoutly held out against God, railing and blaspheming. In the midst of his horrible opposition to Jesus, he fell from a chair stricken with

apoplexy. A physician told him he had but a few moments to live, and he stammered out, with dying breath, "Do n't let Finney pray over my corpse."

Finney led a dying woman to Christ who had been led into Universalism by her husband. At evening, when her husband came home and learned what had happened, he was greatly enraged, and swore he would kill Finney. To that end he loaded a pistol, and went to the church where Finney was to preach. The house was packed almost to suffocation. In the midst of the sermon the man was so overcome by the Holy Ghost that he fell from his seat, groaned, and shrieked out that he was sinking to hell. In the excitement the preaching was stopped, and the time was spent in praying for him. He spent a miserable, sleepless night, in great anguish of mind, and at early dawn went to a grove and prayed till God came in mercy. He then returned to town, met Finney in the street, lifted him from his feet, and swung him around in a Christian embrace.

Here "Father Nash," who had recently passed through a fit of sickness and had great overhauling in his religious experience, joined himself with Finney. "He was another man altogether from what he had ever been at any former period of his Christian life. He was full of the power of prayer, had a 'praying list' of the persons whom he made subjects of prayer every day, sometimes many times a day. His gift of prayer was wonderful, and his faith almost miraculous." This man, no doubt, was a most efficient helper and co-laborer with Finney. He did not preach, and often did not go to the meetings, but remained in his room or went to the groves and wrestled with God in an agony of prevailing prayer.

A wicked man kept a low tavern in the village, and its bar-room was the resort of all the opposers of the revival—a place of blasphemy—and its owner was a railing, abusive man. He would take particular pains to swear and blaspheme whenever he saw a Christian. Father Nash put this man's name upon his praying list.

One night this notorious sinner came to church. Many people feared and abhorred him, and, supposing he had come in to make a disturbance, retired from the church. Finney says: "I kept my eye on him, and very soon became satisfied that he had not come in to make a disturbance, but was in great anguish of mind. He sat and writhed upon his seat, and was very uneasy. He soon arose, and tremblingly asked if he might say a few words. He proceeded to make one of the most heartbroken confessions I ever heard, telling how he had treated God and Christians and the revival and everything good. It broke up the fallow ground in many hearts, and was the most powerful means that could have been used to give impetus to the work. He abolished the profanity and revelry of his house, and a prayer-meeting was held in his bar-room nearly every night." (Memoirs, Chapter V,)

Out in the country not far from this village where Finney was preaching, there was a German settlement and a Church, with the usual amount of piety indicated by a committing of the catechism to memory, accompanied by baptism in childhood and confirmation, but usually with no change of heart.

Members of this Church came to hear Finney preach, and invited him to come out and preach to them. He went, and preached from the text, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." He began by showing what holiness is not. He took everything

that they considered to be holiness, and showed that it was not holiness at all. In the second place, he showed what holiness was. Thirdly, he showed what was meant by seeing the Lord; and then, why those that had no holiness could never see the Lord, be admitted into His presence, and be accepted of Him. He then drove home upon them with the power of the Holy Ghost, and slew them right and left.

It was in the midst of harvesting. The people left their harvesting, and packed the house at one o'clock in the afternoon. This put the whole community under conviction. The whole Church found that they had no saving religion, and they were all converted, and nearly the whole community of Germans. Mr. Finney relates two instances, one of a sick woman, who could neither read nor write, but was so hungry for the gospel that she rose from her sickbed and walked three miles to that meeting, was gloriously converted, and, Mrs. Finney declared, was one of the most remarkable women in prayer she ever heard pray. Another woman testified that she had given her heart to God, and that the Lord had taught her to read since she had learned how to pray. She had never known her letters, and was greatly distressed that she could not read God's Word. She asked Jesus if He would please teach her to read it. After prayer, she thought she could read; and she took the Testament of her children, went over to the schoolma'am, and read to her correctly. This remarkable testimony was confirmed to Mr. Finney by many witnesses. It was only another miracle of grace. Out of this revival there came such gracious and abiding results to the Churches that two commodious stone meeting-houses were built.

Here Mr. Finney tells what he preached: "I insisted upon the voluntary total moral depravity of the unregenerate and the unalterable necessity of a radical change of heart by the Holy Ghost, and by means of the truth. I laid great stress upon prayer as an indispensable condition of promoting the revival. The atonement of Jesus Christ, His Divinity, His Divine mission, His perfect life, His vicarious death, His resurrection, repentance, faith, justification by faith, and all kindred doctrines, were pressed home, and were manifestly made efficacious by the power of the Holy Ghost."

The means used were simply preaching, prayer, and Conference-meetings, much private prayer, much personal conversation, and meetings for the instruction of earnest inquirers. No other means were used. There was no appearance of fanaticism, no bad spirit, no divisions, no heresies, no schisms.

"I should add that I was obliged to take much pains in giving instruction to inquirers. The practice had been, I believe, universal, to set anxious sinners to praying for a new heart and to using means for their own conversion. This implied that they were willing to be Christians, and were taking pains to persuade God to convert them. I tried to make them understand that God was using the means with them, and not they with Him; that God was willing, and they were unwilling; that God was ready, and they were not ready. In short, I tried to shut them up to present faith and repentance as the thing which God required of them, present and instant submission to His will, and acceptance of Christ. I tried to show them that all delay was only an evasion of duty; that all praying for a new heart was only trying to throw the responsibility

of their conversion upon God; and that all efforts to do duty, while they did not give their hearts to God, were hypocritical and delusive."

It will be seen from the above that Mr. Finney was a most careful preacher and teacher. He was not satisfied with appealing to the emotions, though he could do it with great power and unusual success. He showed men their guilt and their duty, and preached a theology that logically threw all the responsibility of sin and impenitence on man rather than on God.

During these revivals the Presbytery met and ordained Mr. Finney. When he began his work his health was run down, and he coughed blood, and it was thought that he could live but a short time. Mr. Gale charged him to preach but once a week, and not more than half an hour at a time. But he rode on horseback from town to town and settlement to settlement, and preached and labored every day and almost every night, and his sermons averaged two hours in length. In six months his health was completely restored, his lungs were perfectly sound, and he did his work without the least fatigue. He wrote: "I preached out of doors; I preached in barns; I preached in schoolhouses; and a glorious revival spread all over that region of country."

It is said that a part of the world goes forward and does something; another part sits on the fence watching them, and growls, "Why didn't you do it the other way?" This homely proverb had curious illustration in the life of Finney. He says:

"I used to meet from ministers a great many rebuffs and reproofs, particularly in respect to my manner of preaching. They would reprove me for illustrating my ideas by reference to the common affairs

of men of different pursuits around me. I addressed men in the language of the common people, and sought to express my ideas in a few words, and in words that were in common use. Before I was converted I had a different tendency, and allowed myself to use ornate language. But when I came to preach the gospel, I was so anxious to be thoroughly understood that I studied in the most earnest manner, on the one hand to avoid what was vulgar, and on the other to express my thoughts with the greatest simplicity of language. Ministers would say, 'Why do n't you illustrate from events of ancient history, and take a more dignified way?' . . . I defended myself by saying that my object was not to cultivate a style of oratory that should soar above the heads of the people, but to make myself understood; and that, therefore, I would use any language adapted to this end, and that did not involve coarseness and vulgarity."

Finney attended the Presbytery about this time, and sat down in the audience. They voted that he should preach at once. The pulpit was an old-fashioned high pulpit, up against the wall. He would not have been at home in it. He arose, stepped into the open space in front, and poured out a sermon from his full heart. One of the brethren stepped up to him, and said: "Mr. Finney, if you come up our way, I should like to have you preach in some of our school districts. I should not like to have you preach in our church. But there are schoolhouses away from the village,—I should like to have you preach in some of those."

"They used to complain," he says, "that I let down the dignity of the pulpit; that I was a disgrace to the ministerial profession; that I talked like a lawyer at the bar; that I talked to the people in a colloquial

manner; that I said 'you' instead of preaching about sin and sinners and saying 'they;' that I said 'hell,' and with such an emphasis as often to shock the people; furthermore, that I urged the people with such vehemence as if they had not a moment to live; and they complained that I blamed the people too much. One Doctor of Divinity told me that he felt a great deal more like weeping over sinners than blaming them. I told him I did not wonder, if he believed that they had a sinful nature, and that sin was entailed upon them, and they could not help it.

"After I had preached some time, and the Lord had everywhere added His blessing, I used to say to ministers who wanted me to preach as they did: 'Show me a more excellent way. Show me the fruits of your ministry, and if they so far exceed mine as to give me evidence that you have found a more excellent way, I will adopt your views. But do you expect me to abandon my views and practices when the results justify my methods? I intend to improve all I can; but I never can adopt your manner of preaching the gospel until I have higher evidence that you are right and I am wrong.' They complained that I was guilty of repetition; that I would take a thought and turn it over and over and illustrate it in many ways, and that I would not interest the educated part of my congregation. But facts soon silenced them when they found that, under my preaching, judges and lawyers and educated men were converted by scores." (See Memoirs, Chapter VI.)

CHAPTER V.

REVIVALS AT ANTWERP, "SODOM," GOUVERNEUR, AND DEKALB.

THERE was a village by the name of Antwerp, north of Evans' Mills. The township was largely owned by a rich land-owner of Ogdensburg, who had built a brick meeting-house to encourage settlement. The meeting-house was locked up, and the hotelkeeper carried the key. A Presbyterian elder, living five miles away, had tried to carry on Sabbath services, until the ungodly Universalists, through whose community he had to pass, would take off the wheels of his carriage, and make it impossible for him to get to the meeting. All religious services were abandoned, and the devil seemed to rule supreme. Finney went there, and found three praying women. They feared it would be impossible to hold a religious service; but one of these Christian sisters opened her parlor. Finney went around and invited the people, and got together an audience of thirteen, and preached to them on Friday night, and announced a service on the Sabbath, for which Finney himself secured the schoolhouse. On Saturday, as he was going about the village, it seemed to him as if the men playing ball on the green, and in every business place, were all cursing and swearing and damning each

other. He thought he had never heard so much profanity, and felt as if he had arrived upon the borders of hell. An awful feeling, a kind of terror, took possession of him. He betook himself to prayer, and pressed his petition until the answer came: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." This completely relieved him of fear.

Sunday morning he went to the woods three times, and prayed for the people until relief came. It was then meeting time. The house was packed. He took for his text John iii, 16. He largely dwelt on the treatment God received for His love. He pointed out men in the audience whom he had heard damning each other the day before, and told them they seemed "to howl blasphemy about the streets like hellhounds, until it seemed to him he had arrived on the verge of hell."

"I felt like rebuking them with all my heart, and yet with a compassion which they could not mistake. It seemed as if my love to God, in view of the abuse they heaped upon Him, sharpened up my mind to the most intense agony. It seemed to myself as if I could rain hail and love upon them at the same time. The people quailed under the message. They did not appear offended; but they wept about as much as I did myself. From that day, appoint a meeting when and where I would, the people would throng to hear, and the work went forward with great power."

Would to God that all of us who are called to preach would learn this simple lesson from this great preacher's experience! The way to preach these stern truths and the judgments of God is with weeping eyes and a compassionate heart.

"SODOM."

Now comes that remarkable incident that shows how the Spirit of God guided and used Finney. On the third Sabbath at Antwerp an aged man came to him as he was entering the pulpit, and asked him to come out and preach in his schoolhouse, three miles distant, where they had never had any services. An appointment was made for the next day at five o'clock in the afternoon. It was a warm day, but the schoolhouse was packed. Finney gave out a hymn, which the people "bawled" out in such awful discords that he had to cover his ears to shut out the distressing sounds. He then dropped on his knees, in a state of desperation, and began to pray. He says: "The Lord opened the windows of heaven, and the Spirit of prayer was poured out, and I let my whole heart out in prayer."

He immediately rose from his knees, and God gave him this text, "Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city." He told them he did not recollect exactly where the text was; but he went on to tell the story of Abraham and Lot and the destruction of Sodom. He saw that, for some unaccountable reason, they were very angry while he was giving the narrative. But when he had finished that, he turned upon them, and said he had understood that they had never had a religious service in that place, and he was compelled to take it for granted that they were an ungodly people. He pressed it home upon them with more and more energy, and with a heart almost bursting. Suddenly an awful solemnity seemed to settle upon them. The congregation began to fall from their seats and cry for mercy. He wrote:

"If I had had a sword in each hand I could not have

cut them off their seats as fast as they fell. I think the whole congregation were on their knees or prostrate in two minutes. Every one prayed for himself who could speak at all.

"I saw the old man who had invited me to preach sitting in the middle of the house, and looking around in utter amazement. I raised my voice almost to a scream, and, pointing to him, said, 'Can't you pray?' He instantly fell upon his knees, and poured out his soul in a stentorian voice to God. The people did not hear. Then I said to them as loud as I could, 'You are not in hell yet; let me direct you to Christ.'"

The explanation of this strange scene was this, as Finney afterward learned: The community was so desperately wicked that with one consent they called themselves "Sodom," and the only Christian in it was the old man who had invited Finney to preach; and they had named him "Lot." Hence their anger at the Bible story, and the explanation of the wonderful leading of the Holy Ghost.

Finney pointed one, and another, and another to Jesus, and they found peace. He had to go to another preaching service, and left the meeting in the charge of the old man, whose name was Mr. Cross. "There was too much interest, and there were too many wounded souls to dismiss the meeting, and so it was held all night. In the morning there were still those that were prostrate and helpless, and they were carried to a private house in the neighborhood to make room for the day-school."

Finney preached there again, and the community was renovated. The converts were sound, and the work, so sudden and noisy in its beginning, was permanent and genuine. A grandson of that old man, Rev.

R. T. Cross, graduated from Oberlin, and was at the head of the Preparatory Department when I was a student in Oberlin College. His father, a son of the old man, was converted in that ever-memorable meeting, and became a minister.

We have mentioned the Universalist neighborhood, whose people took the wheels off the elder's carriage to vent their hatred of God. Finney was invited to preach there, and he did so. With that holy boldness that ever characterized him, he took for his text, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The scene was similar to that in Sodom. Conviction fell upon the whole assembly, and the people with one heart turned to God.

The reader will miss the secret of Finney's success in preaching the gospel to these excessively wicked communities if he fails to bear in mind, first, that he was filled with the Holy Spirit; second, that the intensity of his religious convictions and his courage in presenting the stern truths were fully matched by the tenderness of his heart. "His words of rebuke were not those of one who loved denunciation; they were rather like the faithful probing of the surgeon who knows full well the gravity of the case. When his words of rebuke had accomplished their design, he then, with tears, set forth the love of God and the atoning mercy of Christ." Furthermore, his preaching was intensely Scriptural, and a sermon would consist largely in expounding some great truth of the Bible.

In October, 1824, Finney married Miss Lydia Andrews, a young lady of the highest personal qualities, who had been deeply interested in praying for his conversion. After three days he went to Evans' Mills to spend the Sabbath, expecting to return for his wife the

next week. But revivals broke out in so many places, and calls were so abundant to preach, that he plunged into the work night and day, and never saw his wife until the following spring.

"It would," as Professor Wright has well observed, "be doing the keenest injustice to Finney to attribute this long separation from his wife, so soon after their marriage, to any indifference of feeling. It is to be taken purely as an index of the strength of his devotion to the ministerial work to which he felt himself called. For, throughout his life he was passionately devoted to his family, and was never separated from them except upon occasion of necessity, and then with much self-sacrifice and solicitude."

In the early spring, before the sleighing broke up, he started to get to his wife, one hundred miles away. He had to stop at the town of LeRaysville to have the shoes of his horse reset. It was about noon. No sooner did the people learn that he was in town, than they gathered about him, and begged him to speak at one o'clock. He did so. The interest was so great that he felt constrained to remain over night. This he did from day to day, gathering souls in such numbers that he did not dare to leave the work, and finally was compelled to send another man to bring his wife to him. The great mass of the people were converted, and among them Judge C——, the leading man in the community.

GOUVERNEUR.

While laboring at Antwerp, the wicked people of Gouverneur, twelve miles distant, threatened to come down and mob Finney and break up his meetings. He paid no attention to it. But months afterward, the

Holy Spirit, while he was in prayer, revealed to him in a most explicit way, as clear as the light, that he must go and preach in Gouverneur, and that God would pour out His Spirit there. He afterward saw a man from Gouverneur, and told him of this revelation. He stared at Finney as if he were insane. But Finney charged him to go home and report to the brethren that he was coming, and for them to prepare for the outpouring of the Spirit. Father Nash had joined himself to Finney, and was sent ahead to explore the place, find the spiritual condition, and report to him. Finney sent him back to announce his coming on a certain day.

He writes: "There was a general turning out of the people. The Lord gave me a text, and I went into the pulpit, and let my heart out to the people. The Word took powerful effect." This brief quotation is an epitome of much of Finney's life during these eventful and fruitful years. He had literal revelations from God. God gave him his texts, much of the time, without previous meditation as to what he should preach. When he preached he truly "poured out his heart," and the Holy Spirit caused the Word to take instant and powerful effect. Would to God we had more of such Spirit-filled preachers!

The village hotel was kept by Dr. S——, a confirmed and avowed Universalist. The next day, after the first sermon, Finney found all the Universalists and their leader, Dr. S——, in a shop, and intent on having a debate on the subject. Finney agreed, but insisted on preliminary conditions: First, to take up one point at a time; secondly, that they should not interrupt one another; thirdly, that there should be no caviling or mere banter, but only candor and courtesy in debate.

Finney showed that endless punishment was a Bible doctrine. The Universalist held that *endless punishment was unjust*, and that, if the Bible taught it, it could not be true. Finney then closed in with him on the *justice of endless punishment*. Soon the friends became greatly agitated; then one left the shop, then another, and another, until the leader was left alone. When he had nothing more to say, Finney tenderly urged him to attend to his personal salvation, and then kindly bade him good-morning.

The doctor went home from that conversation, walked his house in agony, and finally told his wife, with tears, that Finney had turned his weapons on his own head. He soon surrendered to Christ. In a few days his companions, one after another, were brought in, till the revival made a clean sweep of them.

The Baptist Church began to oppose the revival. This encouraged a set of young men to join hand in hand to strengthen each other in opposition to the work, and their resistance was peculiarly bitter and strong. Father Nash and Mr. Finney, after a consultation, decided that this opposition must be overcome by prayer, and that it could not be reached in any other way. They therefore retired to a grove, and gave themselves to prayer until they prevailed, and were confident that no power which earth or hell could interpose would be allowed to stop the revival.

Finney preached, and Father Nash gave himself continually to prayer. At one of the Sabbath meetings the young men were all present, and sat braced up against the Spirit of God. "It was too solemn for them to ridicule what they heard and saw; and yet their brazen-facedness and stiff-neckedness were apparent to everybody." Father Nash addressed them

with great earnestness, pointing out the guilt and danger of their course, closing in great warmth with these words: "Now, mark me, young men! God will break your ranks in one week, either by converting some of you, or by sending some of you to hell. He will do it as certainly as the Lord is my God!" He then dropped on his knees and groaned with pain.

The house was still as death, and the people held down their heads. Finney regretted that Father Nash, in his mighty faith, had gone so far, thus committing God to convert some or send some to hell within a week. But, sure enough, on Tuesday morning the leader of the band broke down and was converted, and before the week closed nearly all of them.

This Father Nash was almost as unique and wonderful a character as Finney himself, and was on terms of marvelous intimacy with God. He became a marked subject of attack from those ministers who banded together to oppose Finney. His detractors averred that it was impossible for Father Nash to pray in secret, even though he shut the door of his closet or retired into the depths of the forest, since "they could hear him pray half a mile off." One morning, before sunrise, he rose up, as was his custom, and went back to a grove fifty rods from the road to have a season of prayer alone. A man living a long distance away heard the voice, and knew that it was Father Nash in prayer. It brought a profound sense of the reality of religion to him, and lodged an arrow in his heart. He found no relief from it until Jesus, the Healer, touched his convicted soul.

The work in this place was greatly hindered for a time by the shameful proselyting of the Baptist pastor and people. They had first opposed the revival; but

when there came to be many scores of converts, then they began to preach immersion and to proselyte. The disgraceful procedure went on until the Spirit was grieved, and there was not a convert for six weeks. Finney was compelled to speak on baptism, and was so fair in his discussion that all hearts were touched, sectarianism and narrowness were put to shame, and the blessed Spirit returned with great power, until the great majority of the people in the community were converted to Christ. (Memoirs, Chapter X.)

From Gouverneur, Finney went to DeKalb, a village sixteen miles farther to the north. Here there were Presbyterians and Methodists, and ill-feeling had grown up between them because, in a previous revival led by the Methodists, a number of cases of people falling prostrate under the power of God had taken place, and the Presbyterians had made light of it and resisted the work. But now the tables were to be turned. Finney had preached but a few times when a man fell from his seat near the door. It caused Finney a little uneasiness for fear the old feud would start up; but lo! this time it was a leading member of the Presbyterian Church. In this revival there were many such instances, and in every case they were Presbyterians. This led to their humiliation and confession, and the binding together of Christians in Christian union and love most favorable to the work. An elder of the Church received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Some of the leading people of Ogdensburg came down to visit the meeting over Sunday, among them Elder S——, of the Presbyterian Church. The Spirit-filled Elder B—— invited S—— to his house for refreshment, Sunday noon. As they sat at the table, Elder S—— asked Elder B—— how he got this bless-

ing. B—— replied: "I stopped lying to God. All my Christian life I have been making pretenses, and asking God for things that I was not, on the whole, willing to have; and I had gone on and prayed as other people prayed, and often had been insincere, and really lied to God. As soon as I made up my mind that I would never say anything to God in prayer that I did not really mean, God answered me, and the Spirit came down, and I was filled with the Holy Ghost."

"Mr. S——, who had not yet commenced to eat, shoved his chair back from the table, fell on his knees, and began to confess how he had lied to God, and how he had played the hypocrite in his prayers as well as in his life. The Holy Ghost fell upon him immediately, and filled him as full as he could hold." (Page 139.)

In this fullness of blessing he rushed into the church, and into the pulpit, caught Finney in his arms, and cried, "God bless you; God bless you!" He then began to speak to the people in the power of the Holy Spirit, and people melted on every side, among others his own son. The Roman Catholic who had come from Ogdensburg to measure Finney for a suit of clothes was converted on the spot, and began to testify. Thereupon people were converted on every side. There was no chance to preach. Finney could only sit still and see the salvation of the Lord, by the spontaneous movement of the Holy Ghost in convicting and converting sinners. These people, returning to Ogdensburg, called and prayed and conversed with people along the way, and thus the work spread clear to the city.

We might pause here long enough to express the wish that a multitude of people would stop "lying to the Holy Spirit." The number of people is legion who

pray for the baptism with the Holy Ghost, but who, in their hearts, are not willing to pay the price and meet the responsibility involved in receiving the blessing. It is almost safe to say that a thousand ministers pray for this blessing for every one who is really willing to die to sin and self and the world, and live ever and only for God in holiness of heart.

In October, Finney went to Utica, with his wife, to attend the Synod. It led, as we shall see, to larger and more gracious work than he had yet known. It was preceded by remarkable experiences in prayer. All these revivals of which we have been writing were carried on in the spirit and power of prayer. "Christians would take alarm at any tendency to fanaticism or disorder, and give themselves to prayer that God would direct and control all things." "It was common for young converts to be greatly exercised in prayer, and in some instances they were constrained to pray whole nights, and until their bodily strength was quite exhausted, for the conversion of souls around them."

"In regard to my own experience," Finney writes, "unless I had the experience of prayer, I could do nothing. If even for a day or an hour I lost the spirit of grace and supplication, I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation. For several weeks before going to the Synod I was very strongly exercised in prayer, and had an experience somewhat new to me. I found myself so much exercised, and so borne down with the weight of immortal souls, that I was constrained to pray without ceasing. Some of my experiences, indeed, alarmed me. A spirit of importunity sometimes came upon me so that I would say to God that He had made a promise to answer prayer, and I could not,

and would not, be denied. I felt so certain that He would hear me that frequently I found myself saying to Him: 'I hope Thou dost not think that I can be denied. I come with Thy faithful promises in my hand, and I can not be denied.' I can not tell how absurd unbelief looked to me, and how certain it was, in my mind, that God would answer those prayers that from day to day I was offering in such agony and faith. My impression was that the answer was near, even at the door; and I felt myself strengthened in the Divine life, put on the harness for a mighty conflict with the powers of darkness, and expected soon to see a far more powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God." God did not disappoint His believing child.

CHAPTER VI.

REVIVALS AT WESTERN, ROME, UTICA, AUBURN, TROY, AND NEW LEBANON.

Returning from the Synod at Utica, Finney met Mr. Gale, his old teacher, who insisted that he stop and preach, or at least make him a visit. Gale had lost his health, and was living in the country near the village of Western. The Presbyterian Church had no stated preaching at all, and no pastor. He was in time to attend the Thursday evening prayer-meeting, led by one of the elders. Each elder made a long prayer, which was a mournful wail, telling the Lord how many years they had their prayer-meeting with no answer to their prayers,—by implication throwing the responsibility on God for their barrenness of soul. This stirred Finney to the heart. He arose, took their confessions for a text. He says, "God inspired me to give them a terrible searching." He asked them whether they had come together professedly to mock God. "They all wept, confessed, and broke their hearts before God," and begged him to remain and preach on the Sabbath. On Friday his "mind was greatly exercised." He spent the day in prayer, "and got a mighty hold upon God." "Sunday the house was packed," and he preached, and "God came down with power upon the people," and everybody realized that a revival was on them. He

made an appointment to preach in different parts of the town. The startling experiences of previous revivals were repeated here, and the work swept out farther and farther, until the people were attending his meetings from Rome.

ROME.

Rev. Moses Gillett, then a pastor there, came to hear Finney. After the second visit he said to him: "Brother Finney, it seems to me that I have a new Bible. I never before understood the promises as I do now. My mind is full of the subject, and the promises are new to me." This led Finney to see that God was preparing that pastor for a great work among his people. Rev. Gillett arranged for an exchange, which Finney was reluctant to grant. But he went, and preached three times on Sunday. The Word took immediate effect, and heads bowed before the Lord in the deepest conviction. Monday morning the pastor returned, and, by the advice of Finney, appointed an inquiry-meeting, without letting people know that Finney would be there. To his surprise and great agitation he found a room packed, and the leading members and foremost young men of his congregation there, and "the feeling was so deep that there was danger of an outburst that would be almost uncontrollable." This Finney always endeavored to avoid as a thing that hindered the action of the soul. He spoke a few calm, quiet words; but the stoutest men writhed in their seats. "It would not be possible," he wrote, "for one who had never witnessed such a scene to realize what the force of the truth sometimes is, under the power of the Holy Ghost. It was indeed a two-edged sword. The pain that it produced, when searchingly

presented in a few words of conversation, would create a distress that seemed unendurable."

The pastor, unaccustomed to such a sight, turned pale, and said, "What shall we do? What shall we do?" Finney put his hand on Brother Gillett's shoulder, and whispered, "Keep quiet." He then, in a few words, pointed the convicted to Jesus, stopped short, and led them in prayer in a low, unimpassioned voice, but interceded with the Savior to interpose His blood then and there, and to lead all these sinners to accept the salvation which He proffered, and to believe to the saving of their souls." He rose from his knees, and said: "Now please go home without speaking a word to each other; try to keep silent, and do not break out into any manifestation of feeling, but go to your rooms." Careful as he was, a young man fell to the floor, and several of his companions then fell around him. The people went sobbing and sighing into the street. The next morning people were calling from every direction for Finney and the pastor to visit their families. As they went into a house, the people would rush in and fill the largest room. In some houses they would find people kneeling, and others prostrate on the floor. In the afternoon the large dining-room of the hotel was crammed to its utmost capacity. The state of things was extraordinary. Men of the strongest nerves were cut down and helpless, and had to be carried home. The meeting lasted till nearly midnight, and a great number were hopefully converted. The court-house was opened and crowded daily. Ministers rushed in from neighboring towns, and were filled with amazement at what they saw. Nearly all the professional men and prominent citizens embraced religion. An opposer fell dead. Rev. Gillett's whole congregation

were converted, and he afterward reported that in twenty days five hundred were converted in Rome.

The effect of this revival was also felt in outlying settlements, in some of which all the people were converted. For months a sunrise prayer-meeting was maintained, and was largely attended. Open immorality was banished. So pervasive and permanent was the influence that Mr. Gillett said it did not seem like the same place.

UTICA.

A great excitement sprung up in Utica over this work. The most prominent citizen of Rome was president of a bank in Utica. He was not a Christian. The first time he heard Finney he told his family, "That man is mad, and I should not be surprised if he set the town on fire." He would not go to the meetings, but they went on. At a meeting of the directors of the bank, one of them rallied him on the condition of things at Rome. He responded: "Gentlemen, say what you will, there is something very remarkable in the state of things at Rome. Certainly no human power or eloquence has produced what we see there. I can not understand it. You say it will soon subside. No doubt the intensity of feeling that is now in Rome will soon subside, or the people will become insane. But, gentlemen, there is no accounting for that state of feeling by any philosophy, unless there be something Divine in it." The banker was soon converted.

The county sheriff came from Utica to Rome on business. He said as soon as he crossed the old canal a strange impression came over him, an awe so deep that he could not shake it off. He felt as if God pervaded the whole atmosphere. The hostler of the hotel

appeared to feel the same. He said everybody else appeared to feel just as he did. Such an awe, such a solemnity, such a state of things, he had never had any conception of before. He got out of town as soon as possible, but was converted a few weeks later at Utica.

The minister's wife, a sister of the famous missionary Mills, whose zeal led to the formation of the American Board of Foreign Missions, was converted. She was under awful conviction for many days, until it was feared she would go insane. She finally found pardon, and rushed out of her room with her face all in a glow, exclaiming: "O, Mr. Finney! I have found the Savior! I have found the Savior! Do n't you think that it was the ornaments in my hair that stood in the way of my conversion? I found when I prayed they would come up before me. I was driven to desperation. I said, 'I will not have these things come up again. I will put them away from me forever.' As soon as I had promised that, the Lord revealed Himself to my soul."

These marvelous occurrences were all reported in Utica. A woman in that town was also given such a burden of prayer for the ungodly in the city that she prayed for two days and nights incessantly, until her strength was overcome by exhaustion,—a literal travail of soul. It was God's Spirit preparing the way for the coming of His servant. The pastor, Dr. Aiken, of one of the Presbyterian Churches, invited Finney to preach in his church. The Word took immediate effect, and the place became filled with the manifested influence of the Holy Spirit. The work spread and moved on powerfully. The sheriff was among the first to be converted. At once the leading hotel, where he boarded,

became a center of religious work. The stages stopped there, and travelers, in many instances, stopping for a meal or over night, would get convicted and converted before leaving. Merchants from neighboring villages, coming to town to trade, would get mad because everybody in the stores talked religion; but they themselves would soon be in anguish of soul and bowing to God.

A proud and cultured schoolteacher in Newburg heard of the wonderful work in Rome and Utica, and dismissed her school for two weeks to see it for herself. She got under powerful conviction, and was wonderfully converted. She soon afterward married a Mr. Gulick, and went with him as a missionary to the Sandwick Islands, where she did a great work for Christ.

The Oneida Presbytery met during the revival, and a minister, on the afternoon of the closing day, made a violent speech against the revival, which greatly shocked and grieved the Christians present. They gave themselves to prayer, and there was a great crying to God that he would counteract the evil influence of that speech. The next morning the minister who made it was found dead in his bed.

THE MILL SCENE.

The brother-in-law of Mr. Finney was superintendent of a cotton factory in a neighboring village, now called New York Mills. Finney, by invitation, went there, and preached an evening sermon in a schoolhouse. It was crowded, especially with mill-operatives. The Word took powerful effect. The next morning, after breakfast, Finney went into the factory to look through it. He observed, as he was passing along in

silence, a good deal of agitation among those who were busy at the looms and other implements of work. In one room were many young women. Finney could see that they were excitedly talking about him. One was trying to mend a broken thread, but her hand trembled so that she could not tie it. "When I came within eight or ten feet of her I looked solemnly at her. She observed it, and was quite overcome, and sank down, and burst into tears. The impression caught almost like powder, and in a few moments all in the room were in tears. The feeling spread through the factory. The owner of the establishment was present, and, seeing the condition of things, though not a Christian, he said to the superintendent, 'Stop the mill, and let the people attend to religion; for it is more important that our souls should be saved than that this factory should run.'" The factory was immediately stopped, the hands were assembled in the largest room, and Finney spoke to them. "A more powerful meeting," he says, "I scarcely ever attended. The revival went through the mill with astonishing power, and in a few days nearly all were converted." There were hundreds working in this mill.

A young man of unusual gifts in Hamilton College, who afterwards became quite famous, Theodore Weld by name, came over to inspect the meetings, declaring it was all fanaticism, and boasting to his college-mates that he would not be moved. He heard Finney but once, when he met him and abused him for an hour in a most shameful manner. Finney said a few words to him about his soul, and left him. That night he spent by turns walking the floor and prostrate in agony, angry and rebellious, yet so convicted that he could hardly live. Just at daylight a pressure came upon him

that crushed him down to the floor. He finally gave his heart to God, went the next night to the meeting, and made a humble confession, and from that time became a very efficient helper, and for years was a mighty winner of souls.

This revival spread from Rome and Utica as a center in all directions, as Finney circled out. Of five hundred conversions in one place, there was not a case of apostasy after eight months. A pamphlet was published by a Presbyterian minister describing the revival, and stating that there were three thousand converts within the bounds of the Presbytery. Probably more thorough conversions never took place under any preacher in the history of the Christian Church.

Finney stops in his Memoirs to tell us what he preached that God so blessedly used. It were well if all preachers would note them well:

"The doctrines preached in these revivals were those I always preached. Instead of telling sinners to use the means of grace and pray for a new heart, we called on them to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit, and pressed the duty of instant surrender to God. We told them the Spirit was striving with them to induce them now to give Him their hearts, now to believe, and to enter at once upon a life of devotion to Christ, of faith, and love, and Christian obedience. We taught them that, while they were praying for the Holy Spirit, they were constantly resisting Him, and that if they would at once yield to their own convictions of duty, they would be Christians. We tried to show them that everything they did or said before they had submitted, believed, given their hearts to God, was all sin, was not that which God required them to do, but was simply deferring repentance and resisting the Holy Ghost.

"Such teaching as this was, of course, opposed by many; nevertheless it was greatly blessed by the Spirit of God. Formerly it had been supposed necessary that a sinner should remain under conviction a long time; and it was not uncommon to hear old professors of religion say that they were under conviction many months or years before they found relief; and they evidently had the impression that the longer they were under conviction, the greater was the evidence that they were truly converted. We taught the opposite of this. I insisted that if they remained long under conviction, they were in danger of becoming self-righteous, in the sense that they would think that they had prayed a great while and done a great deal to persuade God to save them; and that finally they would settle down with a false hope. We told them that under this protracted conviction they were in danger of grieving the Spirit of God away, and when their distress of mind ceased, a reaction would naturally take place; they would feel less distress, and perhaps obtain a degree of comfort from which they were in danger of inferring that they were converted; that the bare thought that they were possibly converted might create a degree of joy and peace; and that this state of mind might still further delude them by being taken as evidence that they were converted.

"We tried thoroughly to dispose of this false teaching. We insisted then, as I have ever done since, on immediate submission as the only thing that God could accept at their hands, and that all delay, under any pretext whatever, was rebellion against God. It became very common under my preaching for persons to be convicted and converted in the course of a few hours, and sometimes in the course of a few minutes. Such

sudden conversions were alarming to many good people; and, of course, they predicted that the converts would fall away, and prove not to be soundly converted. But the event proved that among those sudden conversions were some of the most influential Christians that have ever been in that region of country. This has been my experience through all my ministry."

REVIVAL AT AUBURN.

It was in the summer of 1826. Dr. Lansing, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Auburn, came to Utica to witness the revival, and urged Finney to go out and labor with him. He did so. He soon found that some of the professors in the theological seminary in that place were taking an attitude of hostility to the revival. We shall speak of this opposition of ministers in a chapter by itself. It is an interesting phase of all progressive work in the kingdom of God.

In Auburn, as in other places, God was with His faithful servant. A prominent physician, an elder in the Presbyterian Church, was felled to the floor by the Holy Spirit coming upon him. A Universalist bitterly opposed the work, as they invariably did, and forbade his wife to attend the meetings. The poor wife wrestled in prayer for her husband, and he was led by the Spirit to invite her to go with him to church. Finney knew nothing of this. He had been visiting and laboring with inquirers all day, and he reached the pulpit, as he often did in those days, without either sermon or text. During the introductory service a text occurred to his mind from which he had never preached. It was the words of the man with an unclean spirit, who cried out, "Let us alone." God helped him to depict

in a most vivid manner the conduct of sinners who wanted to be let alone, and tried to keep others from God. In the midst of the discourse the Universalist fell from his seat, and cried out in such a terrific manner that all preaching was at an end. He wept aloud, and confessed his sins in a way that brought tears and sobs to nearly every one in the house. The Universalist was soon rejoicing in conscious pardon.

Dr. Lansing's Church members were much conformed to the world, and were accused by the unconverted of being leaders in dress, and fashion, and worldliness. Finney, as usual, directed his preaching so as to secure the reformation of the Church. One Sabbath he preached on that line as searchingly as he was able, and then called upon the pastor to pray. The pastor was so much impressed with the sermon that he supplemented the discourse with an earnest appeal to the people. Just then a man arose in the gallery, and said in a distinct tone: "Mr. Lansing, I do not believe that such remarks from you can do any good while you wear a ruffled shirt and a gold ring, and while your wife and the ladies of your family sit, as they do before the congregation, dressed as leaders in the fashions of the day." It seemed as if this would kill Dr. Lansing outright. He cast himself over the pulpit, and wept like a child. The people almost universally dropped their heads upon the seat in front of them, and many wept on every side. With the exception of the sobs and sighs, the house was profoundly silent.

Dr. Lansing was a good man. He had worn ruffled shirts from childhood; his ring was very small, and given him by his dying wife with the request that

he would wear it for her sake. He had done so without a thought of its being a stumbling-block. But he said, "If these things are an offense, I will not wear them." The Church had a public confession of their backsliding and want of a Christian spirit written, and they stood while it was read, many of them in tears. It is needless to say that Church was revived. The revival spread to Cayuga, and to Skaneateles, and to other places.

REVIVAL AT TROY, AUTUMN OF 1826.

Rev. Dr. Beeman and his session invited Finney to come and labor with them in Troy. He spent the autumn and winter of 1826 in that city and vicinity. We have few incidents recorded; for Mr. Finney, in his Memoirs, soon begins to tell us of the opposition of the preachers, which we will relate in the next chapter. He does tell us that the revival was powerful in that city; that the Presbytery put Dr. Beeman on trial during the revival, and he was acquitted of all charges against him; that the failure of the effort to break down Dr. Beeman considerably discomfited the outside movement to break down the revival; that Christian people continued praying mightily to God; and he (Finney) kept up preaching and praying incessantly, and the revival went on with increasing power; that Mr. S——, cashier of a bank in that city, was so pressed by the spirit of prayer for the conversion of the president of the bank that, when the meeting closed, he could not rise from his knees. The president was soon after converted. These incidents are of exceeding value as showing the large place which prayer held in the revivals under Finney.

NEW LEBANON REVIVAL.

A young lady from New Lebanon, Columbia County, came to Troy during the revival to purchase a dress for a ball. A cousin, lately converted, urged her to attend the meetings and hear Finney. At first she was full of enmity of heart; but soon became deeply convicted, then thoroughly converted. She returned home, not to participate in a ball, but to prepare the Church for Finney to come and hold a revival. It started in her own home with her father, who was an elder of the Presbyterian Church. "Most of the prominent men in the community were converted." A young man by the name of John T. Avery was converted, who afterward became a minister and a celebrated evangelist, and who labored in a Church of which I was a member in my boyhood, about 1860. This was in the late spring and early summer of 1827. For a little time God had withdrawn His precious servant from the strife of tongues and the opposition that was rolling up against him, and rejoiced his heart by another harvest of souls.

CHAPTER VII.

MINISTERIAL OPPOSITION AND THE NEW LEBANON CONVENTION.

The devil hates true religion and all Scriptural revivals with a perfect hatred. He is never at a loss to find means and agencies to oppose them. One of his most subtle and Satanic methods is to arouse prominent and eminent leaders in the Church to oppose their brethren who are successful in winning souls. Paul's worst enemies were his own brethren, the Jews, and members of the Sanhedrin. The dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church thirsted for the blood of Luther. Men prominent in the Church, to their abiding disgrace, rolled up a mighty opposition against John Wesley. The holiness preachers are opposed in the same way to-day by dead Churches and barren preachers. Finney did not escape.

It is with great sorrow that we must record things that dim the fame of two or more names honorable in the history of the American Churches. When Finney went to Auburn he was not fully aware of the amount of opposition he was destined to meet from the ministry; not the ministry in the region where he labored, but from those where he had not labored, and who knew personally nothing of him, but were influenced by the false reports which they heard. But in

that center of learning he found, from various sources, that a system of espionage was being carried on that was destined to result, and intended to result, in an extensive union of ministers and Churches to hedge in and prevent the spread of revivals in connection with his labors.

Asahel Nettleton, the evangelist, and Dr. Lyman Beecher, of Boston, were the leaders in this unseemly opposition. Nettleton boasted that Finney should go no farther east than Central New York. Finney said nothing to anybody publicly or privately, but gave himself incessantly to prayer. "I looked to God with great earnestness day after day to be directed, asking Him to show me the path of duty, and give me grace to ride out the storm. I shall never forget what a scene I passed through one day in my room at Dr. Lansing's, of Auburn. The Lord showed me, as in a vision, what was before me. He drew so near to me while I engaged in prayer that my flesh literally trembled on my bones. I shook from head to foot under a full sense of the presence of God. At first, and for some time, it seemed more like being on the top of Sinai, amidst its full thunderings, than in the presence of the cross of Christ. Never in my life was I so awed and humbled before God as then. Nevertheless, instead of feeling like fleeing, I seemed drawn nearer and nearer to God, to that Presence that filled me with such unutterable awe and trembling. After a season of great humiliation before Him, there came a great lifting up. God assured me that He would be with me and uphold me; that no opposition should prevail against me; that I had nothing to do in regard to all this matter but to keep about my work, and wait for the salvation of God. The sense of God's presence, and all that passed

between my soul and God at that time, I can never describe. It led me to be perfectly trustful, perfectly calm, and to have nothing but the most kindly feelings toward all the brethren that were misled, and were arraying themselves against me. I felt assured that all would come out right; that my true course was to leave everything to God, and to keep about my work; and as the storm gathered and the opposition increased, I never for one moment doubted how it would result. I was never disturbed by it; I never spent a waking hour in thinking about it, when, to all outward appearances, it seemed as if all the Churches of the land, except where I had labored, would unite to shut me out of their pulpits. This was the avowed determination, as I understood, of the men that led in the opposition. They were so deceived that they thought there was no effectual way but to unite, and, as they expressed it 'put him down.' But God assured me that they could not put me down.

"The Lord did not allow me to lay the opposition to heart, and I can truly say, so far as I can recollect, I never had an unkind feeling toward Mr. Nettleton or Dr. Beecher or any leading opposer of the work during the whole of their opposition."

It seems that Rev. William R. Weeks, an extreme Calvinist of a community where Finney labored, opposed him on theological grounds. He "held that both sin and holiness were produced in the mind by a direct act of Almighty Power; that God made men sinners or holy at His sovereign discretion, but in both cases by a direct act of Almighty Power, an act as irresistible as that of creation itself; that, in fact, God was the only proper agent in the universe, and that all creatures acted, only as they were moved and compelled to act,

by His irresistible power; that every sin in the universe, both of men and of devils, was the result of a direct, irresistible act on the part of God."

Such an insane theology is certainly a blasphemous libel on God. Of course, a man holding such doctrines, and the philosophy and methods that would naturally follow, would be led to oppose Finney. He, and others like him, wrote letters abroad, misrepresenting the work and poisoning the minds of prominent leaders in Massachusetts and Connecticut. A great cry and excitement was raised against "NEW MEASURES." He wrote a pamphlet, and so also did a Unitarian. Evil reports spread far and near, until at last, in the summer of 1827, a Convention was called to meet at New Lebanon to inquire into the nature and evils of the late revivals in Central New York. Finney was there, and the pastors with whom he had labored.

The clergymen present from the East were Dr. Lyman Beecher, then the leading revival pastor of Boston and Massachusetts; Dr. Herman Humphrey, president of Amherst College; Dr. Justin Edwards, of Andover, Mass.; Caleb J. Tenney, of Wethersfield; and Dr. Joel Hawes, of Hartford, Conn. Upon Dr. Beecher and Asahel Nettleton was thrown the responsibility of endeavoring to check the evils that were supposed to be fostered by Finney's work.

Two lives of Finney and the "Memoir of Nettleton" are before me. I may be wrong, but I can not help feeling that Nettleton was moved by jealousy of the rising fame and unparalleled success of Finney to a greater extent than he himself realized. He was nine years older than Finney, at this time forty-four years old. He had been, up to Finney's advent, the most successful evangelist the East, or, for that matter, the

country had produced. Dr. Beecher wrote of him in 1827: "Mr. Nettleton has served God and his generation with more self-denial, and constancy, and wisdom, and success than any man living. . . . Considering the extent of his influence, I regard him as beyond comparison the greatest benefactor which God has given to this Nation, and, through his influence in promoting pure and powerful revivals of religion, as destined to be one of the greatest benefactors of the world."

He had certainly made a good name for himself in Zion. But at the age of forty-two to forty-four he began to be agitated and excited over exaggerated and hostile and untruthful reports of the revivals under Finney. He fell utterly into Satan's trap, and went so far in bitter opposition to Finney that God seemed to set him aside. His biography shows only four hundred conversions in the next ten years. He never recovered himself.

Dr. Beecher sent Nettleton to Albany in the autumn of 1826, to hold a meeting and make a stand against the revivals under Finney, and keep them from spreading. They might as well have tried to sweep back the ocean tides with a broom; for God was with him. Finney had the profoundest esteem and confidence in Nettleton, a real reverence for him as an honored servant of God. He had such a longing desire to see him and learn by sitting at his feet, that he often dreamed of visiting him.

Finney went to Albany and had an interview with him, and talked briefly on theology. When Finney told him that he intended to remain in Albany and hear him preach in the evening, he manifested great uneasiness, and remarked that he "must not be seen with him." So Finney went and sat in the gallery with a

judge, and saw enough to satisfy him that he could expect no advice or instruction from Nettleton. "It was plain that Nettleton was unwilling to be in his company, and was holding him at arm's length, and would not say anything to him with regard to revivals."

The author of "Memoir of Nettleton," on page 238, represents him as having two interviews with Finney, and expostulating with him about his "calamitous measures," and trying to reform him, so that they could co-operate together. This is manifestly incorrect in every particular. Nettleton saw Finney but once, did not mention revival work, and was so far from wanting to co-operate with him that he would not be seen in his company. It is a sad comment on the life of a good man, and shows how guarded and careful even the leaders in Israel need to be.

Thomas W. Seward, Esq., in an address upon the history of the city of Utica, said of the revival under Finney: "The scene in the church was solemn beyond description. No accessories to heighten the interest or deepen the impression were ever employed. Beyond some unaffected yet striking peculiarities of voice and manner in the speaker, there was nothing to attract curiosity or to offend the most fastidious or carping sense of propriety. It is an inadequate tribute of praise to say of his preaching that, whether it was distinguished most for intellectual subtlety, strong denunciation of sin, or fearful portrayal of the wrath to come, it had its reward in uncounted accessions to the Christian ranks and renewed vigor of religious life. As a pulpit orator his place among the foremost of his time was long ago assured." (C. G. Finney, by Wright, page 60.)

Rev. Mr. Cross says of Finney's preaching in his

community: "His style was dignified, his manner urbane, his spirit childlike; the transforming effect of the revival was marked, and so deeply was the place penetrated by religious feeling that it was impossible for six years to organize a dancing party, and it was unprofitable to have a circus." (C. G. Finney, by Wright, page 61.)

Dr. Charles P. Bush, in his "Reminiscences of Finney," says "that the whole character of the city of Rochester was changed by the preaching of Finney, and the elevated moral tone was felt for forty years."

Yet such a beloved and efficient servant of God had practically to be put on trial by his brethren for "calamitous measures." Thus his Master was tried before him.

From the various accounts of this Convention before me, it is manifest that Beecher and Nettleton came to the Convention committed against the revivals, and felt that their reputation was at stake, and that they must be justified in their opposition to Finney by the Convention. When the question was raised about the sources of their information, Dr. Beecher replied: "We have not come here to be catechised, and our spiritual dignity forbids us to answer any such questions." When the question came up as to the truth of the wild reports about the revivals, Dr. Beecher and Mr. Nettleton took the position that "the testimony of Finney and all the ministers who had labored with him was not to be received, because they were the objects of the censure, and it would be testifying in their own case; they were not admissible as witnesses, and the facts should not be received from them." Dr. Humphrey very firmly remarked that they were the very actors in the case, and knew what they had done, and

their statements were to be received by the Convention without hesitation. To this all agreed but Beecher and Nettleton.

The Convention sat for several days, and as the facts came out in regard to the revivals, Mr. Nettleton became so agitated and nervous that he was unable to attend several of the sessions. "He plainly saw that he was losing ground, and that nothing could be ascertained that could justify the course that he was taking. Dr. Beecher also felt it keenly. All the brethren declared that the evil reports circulated about the revivals were untrue, so far as Finney was concerned." But their report was not believed by Dr. Beecher. In a letter to Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, he wrote that the spirit of lying was so predominant in those revivals that the brethren engaged in them could not be at all believed. (Memoirs of Finney, p. 191.)

In Beecher's biography (Vol. II, p. 101) he is represented as saying to Finney at the Convention: "Finney, I know your plan, and you know I do; you mean to come to Connecticut, and carry a streak of fire to Boston. But if you attempt it, as the Lord liveth, I 'll meet you at the State line and call out the artillerymen, and fight every inch of the way to Boston, and then I 'll fight you there." We make this brief comment on this brave threat, that in a little time Finney was in Boston preaching in Beecher's church.

The reader doubtless by this time is curious to know what were these "new measures," these "calamitous measures" about which some of the leaders in Zion had worked themselves up into such a heat. Here they are as copied from the "Memoir of Nettleton:"

"Connected with this excitement, various measures were introduced, similar to those which, in former

times, had been the great instrument of marring the purity of revivals and promoting fanaticism; such as PRAYING FOR PERSONS BY NAME; ENCOURAGING FEMALES TO PRAY AND EXHORT IN PROMISCUOUS ASSEMBLIES; CALLING UPON PERSONS TO COME TO THE ANXIOUS-SEAT, OR TO RISE UP IN THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY TO SIGNIFY THAT THEY HAD GIVEN THEIR HEARTS TO GOD, OR HAD MADE UP THEIR MIND TO ATTEND TO RELIGION." (Page 237.)

To us of to-day all this sounds like an invention of fiction, an idle dream of what might have been in the past. During our college vacation this summer (1901) I did revival work in five States—Texas, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts—and I saw all these things done in each State, and no one protested or thought of making objection. Here in Texas Holiness University, Greenville, Texas, in whose chapel I am writing these lines, December 20, 1901, we see all these things constantly. We have had seventy-seven persons saved or sanctified at our altars since September 24th, and one hundred and seventy-three since January 1st of this year; and if genuine Christian characters are made anywhere, they are being made here. Such a worked-up excitement over such things that God has so used and blessed, reminds me of the phrase "much ado about nothing." Yet it was once a painful fact and living history. But it did not stop the work of Finney, or check it for an hour. We shall see that God gave him more power and a wider sweep of influence than ever before, while Mr. Nettleton was set aside, and Dr. Beecher was utterly impotent to hurt the work. He afterward went from Boston to be the president of Lane Theological Seminary, in Cinnati, Ohio. I once visited that seminary, and was there

shown Dr. Beecher's lecture-room and the very chair in which he used to sit, back of which on the wall was his portrait. "But," said the professor, who was showing me around, "we now quote Finney oftener than we do Beecher in these lecture-rooms."

Finney wrote: "As I have since labored extensively in this country and in Great Britain, and no exceptions have been taken to my measures, it has been assumed and asserted that, since the opposition made by Mr. Nettleton and Dr. Beecher, I have been reformed, and have given up the measures they complained of. This is an entire mistake. I have always and everywhere used all the measures I used in those revivals, and I have often added other measures whenever I have deemed it expedient. I have never seen the necessity of reformation in this respect. Were I to live my life over again, I think that, with the experience of more than forty years in revival labors, I should, under the same circumstances, use substantially the same measures that I did then.

"And let me not be understood to take credit to myself. No, indeed. It was no wisdom of my own that directed me. I was made to feel my ignorance and dependence, and led to look continually to God for His guidance. I had no doubt then, nor have I ever had, that God led me by His Spirit to take the course I did. So clearly did He lead me from day to day, that I never did or could doubt that I was Divinely directed.

"That the brethren who opposed those revivals were good men I do not doubt; that they were misled and most grossly and injuriously deceived, I have just as little doubt. If they died under the belief that they had just reasons for what they did, and wrote, and

said, and that they corrected the evils of which they complained, they died grossly deceived in this respect. It is not for the safety of the Church, the honor of revivals, or the glory of Christ that posterity should believe that those evils existed, and were corrected by such a spirit and in such a manner as has been represented. I should have remained silent had not so marked an effort been made to perpetuate and confirm the delusion that the opposition to those revivals was justifiable and successful.

"I have no doubt that Dr. Beecher was led by somebody to believe that his opposition was called for. . . . Had not Dr. Beecher's biography reopened this subject, with the manifest design to justify the course that he took, and rivet the impression upon the public mind that, in making that opposition to those revivals, he performed a great and good work, I should not feel called upon say what I can not now be justified in withholding. In reading his biography I stand amazed in view of the suspicions and delusions under which his mind was laboring. I was as ignorant as a child of all this management revealed in the biography. I shared none of the terrors and distractions that seem to have so much distressed Dr. Beecher and Mr. Nettleton.

"The truthful record of my labors up to the time of the Convention, and from that time onward, will show how little I knew or cared what Dr. Beecher and Mr. Nettleton were saying or doing about me. I bless the Lord that I was kept from being diverted from my work by their opposition, and that I never gave myself any uneasiness about it. At Auburn, God had given me the assurance that He would overrule all opposition, without my turning aside to answer my op-

posers. This I never forgot. Under this Divine assurance I went forward with a single eye and a trustful spirit; and now, when I read what agitations, suspicions, and misapprehensions possessed the minds of these brethren, I stand amazed at their delusion and consequent anxiety respecting myself and my labors. At the very time that Dr. Beecher was in Philadelphia (in 1828), managing with members of the General Assembly, as related in his biography, I was laboring in that city, and had been for several months, in different Churches, in the midst of a powerful revival of religion, perfectly ignorant of Dr. Beecher's errand there. I can not be too thankful that God kept me from being agitated, and changed in my spirit or views of labor, by all the opposition of those days." (Memoirs of Finney, Chapter XVI.)

CHAPTER VIII.

REVIVALS AT STEPHENTOWN, WILMINGTON, PHILADELPHIA, AND READING.

1827-1830.

A YOUNG lady from Stephentown came to New Lebanon, after the Convention, and heard Finney preach. She was so impressed that she invited him to come to her place and preach. Finney told her his hands were full, and he thought he could not. Her utterance was choked with deep feeling, and Finney's mind became stirred profoundly over the condition of things in the place. It seems that the only church in the place was an endowed Presbyterian Church that had been ministered to for many years by a minister until the Church was run down entirely, and the minister himself had become an infidel. The only unmarried person in the Church was the young lady who invited Finney to preach. Nearly the whole town was in a state of impenitence. Most of the people lived scattered along a street nearly five miles long, and there was not a religious family on the street, nor a single house in which family prayer was maintained.

Finney made an appointment to preach the next Sunday afternoon. Here occurred one of the characteristic incidents of which Finney's life was so full.

He asked the person who was to take him in his carriage, "Have you a steady horse?" "O yes!" he replied; "perfectly so. What made you ask the question?" "Because," said Finney, "if the Lord wants me to go to Stephentown, the devil will prevent it if he can; and if you have not a steady horse, he will try to make him kill me." Strange to say, the horse ran away twice, a thing he had never done before, and came near killing them.

The people were solemn and attentive. Miss S—— spent the whole of the following night in prayer. The spirit of prayer also came powerfully upon Finney. It spread so much and was so answered that soon the Word would cut the strongest men down and render them entirely helpless.

On the evening of the day of the State election, one of the men who had sat at the table to receive votes all day was so overcome by conviction that he could not leave his seat. In another pew was another man in the same condition. The infidel preacher mightily opposed the work, and God struck him down, so that during the revival he died a horrible death. It broke the spell of his influence, and there was a great turning to the Lord. There was one family of sixteen, and another of seventeen, all of whom were converted. The revival was characterized by a mighty spirit of prevailing prayer; overwhelming conviction of sin; sudden and powerful conversions to Christ, great love and abounding joy of the converts, and their great earnestness, activity, and usefulness in their prayers and labors for others. Nearly all the inhabitants of the town were gathered into the Church, and the town was morally renovated. (Chap. XVII of Memoirs.)

WILMINGTON.

A Rev. Mr. Gilbert, of Wilmington, Delaware, visited his father in New Lebanon while Finney was preaching there, and heard him. He earnestly invited him to Wilmington. Mr. Gilbert had the old Calvinistic doctrines, and he had trained his people until they were afraid to do anything for a revival lest they should take the work out of the hands of God. Their theory was, that God would convert sinners in His own time; and that, therefore, to urge them to immediate repentance, and, in short, to attempt to promote a revival, was to attempt to make men Christians by human agency and human strength, and thus to dishonor God by taking the work out of His hands.

With his usual courage, Finney took for his text, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die?" He showed what a new heart was, and the sinner's responsibility to have one. He preached for two hours. The house was packed. The audience was amazed at this new gospel. Some laughed, some wept, some were angry; but so spellbound were they held that they rose to their feet and stood in all parts of the house. He writes: "I endeavored to show that if man was as helpless as their views represented him to be, he was not to blame for his sins. If he had lost in Adam all power of obedience, so that obedience had become impossible to him, and that not by his own act or consent, but by the act of Adam, it was mere nonsense to say that he could be blamed for what he could not help. I endeavored also to show that, in that case, the atonement was no grace, but really a debt due to mankind on the part of God for having

placed them in a condition so deplorable and so unfortunate. Indeed, the Lord helped me to show up with irresistible clearness the peculiar dogmas of Old-schoolism (Calvinism) and their inevitable results."

The pastor himself accepted the truth of the sermon, and, going out of church, said to a parishioner, "I am sorry to say I have never preached the gospel." From that day the work went forward, and the pastor and his people got where they could wisely labor to win souls.

PHILADELPHIA, 1828-1830.

In the meantime Dr. Patterson, a Presbyterian pastor of Philadelphia, invited Finney to preach in his church. It led to his alternating every other night between Wilmington and Philadelphia, going back and forth daily by boat. The Word took such effect in Philadelphia that soon it was evident to Finney that he must give his whole time to that city.

One day Mr. Patterson said to him: "Brother Finney, if the Presbyterian ministers in this city find out your views, and what you are preaching to the people, they will hunt you out of the city as they would a wolf." He replied: "I can not help it. I can preach no other doctrine; and if they must drive me out of the city, let them do it, and take the responsibility. But I do not believe that they can get me out."

He says: "I did not preach in a controversial way, but simply employed the truth in my instruction to saints and sinners in a way so natural as not, perhaps, to excite very much attention except from discriminating theologians." One night he preached on this text, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Him-

self a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." From this he preached the nature and universality of the atonement, and the sermon attracted so much attention and excited such an interest that, by request, he preached it seven different evenings in succession in as many different churches.

He preached for months in all the Presbyterian churches in the city but one, with such gracious results that he was urged to take a central position in the city. A German church, seating three thousand, the largest audience-room in the city, was secured, and there he preached for months. It seems, from the Memoirs, that he preached in this city not far from two years.

In the spring of 1829 the lumbermen came down the Delaware with their rafts from the "lumber regions" up the river. Many of them, reaching the city, heard of the revival, attended Finney's meetings, got converted, and went back to the lumber-camps and told the story of salvation, and people turned to Christ in vast numbers. In 1831, three men from that region visited Finney in Auburn to inquire how they could get ministers to go in there. They said that the revival had extended along the river for eighty miles, and there was not a single minister of the gospel there, and not less than FIVE THOUSAND people were converted in that lumber region.

Finney tells an incident or two that occurred in Philadelphia, which I am moved to mention briefly. Among those who opposed his meetings was a German skeptic. His wife had come to the meetings, and was thoroughly converted. He was a man of athletic frame and great fixedness of purpose. When he learned that his wife had become a Christian, he for-

bade her coming to the meetings. She asked Finney about it. He told her "to avoid giving offense as much as she innocently could, but in no case to omit her duty to God for the sake of complying with his wishes; and that, as he was an infidel, she could not safely follow his advice."

She went to meeting again, and he threatened to kill her. She thought it only a vain threat, and went again. When she returned he was in a great rage, locked the door, drew out a dagger, and swore he would kill her. She fled upstairs. He caught a light to follow her, which the servant blew out. In the darkness she got down by the back stairs into the cellar and out of the cellar window, and passed the night with a friend. Thinking his rage would be over in the morning, she returned early. She found the house in great disorder; he had broken up the furniture in his insane rage. As she entered the house he pursued her again through the house with a drawn dagger. It was daylight, and she could not escape him. As she reached the last room, she turned to face him, fell upon her knees, and cried to God for help. At this point God arrested him. He glared at her for a moment, dropped his dagger, and fell upon the floor and cried for mercy himself. He confessed his sins to God and to her, and begged both to forgive him. "From that moment he was a wonderfully-changed man, and became one of the most earnest of Christian converts, and became greatly attached to Finney, who received him and his wife into the Church and baptized their children."

Finney tells also of a minister's daughter who had been trained in Calvinism by her father from childhood, and led to think that if she was one of the elect

she would be converted in due time, and that until she was converted and her nature changed by the Spirit of God, she could do nothing for herself but to read her Bible and pray for a new heart. She became greatly convicted, but took her father's advice, and waited for God to do His sovereign work. She promised God that she would never marry till she was a Christian, supposing that God would soon convert her. When eighteen years of age she became engaged to a noble young man, but deferred marriage, according to her vow, until she was converted. She thus kept him waiting five years, until he was thrown from a carriage and suddenly killed. This aroused the enmity of her heart against God, and she accused Him of dealing hardly with her.

Finney's preaching stripped all these refuges of lies away from her. She saw that her father's teaching had been wrong, and that she should have given her heart to God long ago, and that she herself, and not God, was entirely to blame. The thought of her blasphemous attitude toward God in blaming Him as she had done threw her into despair. Out of this state of mind Finney had to lead her, when she became a most humble, submissive, and beautiful convert. (Memoirs, Chap. XVIII.)

Here the great evangelist in his Memoirs pays his respects to the Calvinistic theology of Princeton in the following words: "As I found myself in Philadelphia in the heart of the Presbyterian Church, and where Princeton views were almost universally embraced, I must say still more emphatically than I have done, if possible, that the greatest difficulty I met in promoting revivals of religion was the false instruction given to the people, and especially to inquiring

sinners. Indeed, in all my ministerial life, in every place and country where I have labored, I have found this difficulty to a greater or less extent; and I am satisfied that multitudes are living in sin who would immediately be converted if they were truly instructed. The foundation of the error of which I speak is the dogma that human nature is sinful in itself, and that, therefore, sinners are *entirely unable* to become Christians.

"It is admitted, either expressly or virtually, that sinners may want to be Christians, and that they really do want to be Christians, and often try to be Christians, and yet somehow fail. It had been the practice, and still is to some extent, when ministers were preaching repentance and urging the people to repent, to save their orthodoxy by telling them that they could not repent any more than they could make a world. But the sinner must be set to do something; and with all their orthodoxy, they could not bear to tell him that he had nothing to do. They must, therefore, set him self-righteously to pray for a new heart. They would sometimes tell him to do his duty, to press forward in duty, to read his Bible, to use the means of grace; in short, they would tell him to do *anything and everything but the very thing which God commands him to do.* GOD COMMANDS HIM TO REPENT NOW, TO BELIEVE NOW, TO MAKE TO HIM A NEW HEART NOW. But they were afraid to urge God's claims in this form, because they were continually telling the sinner that *he had no ability whatever* to do these things."

Here he tells what he heard a good minister preach in England. His text was, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." He made four points: 1. Repentance is an involuntary change, a

mere state of the sensibility—feeling bad over sin. 2. It is the sinner's duty to repent. 3. Although God required it of them, they could not repent, and God knew it was impossible for them to repent, only as He gave them repentance. 4. You ask, then, what you shall do. "Go home and pray for repentance; if it does not come, keep praying until it does come."

Finney says: "I actually found it difficult to keep from screaming to the people to repent, and not to think that they were doing their duty in merely praying for repentance. Such instruction always pained me exceedingly, and much of my labor in the ministry has consisted in correcting those views, and impressing the sinner immediately to do just what God commands him to do.

"When the sinner has asked me if the Spirit of God has nothing to do with it, I have said: 'Yes, as a matter of fact, you will not do it of yourself. But the Spirit of God is now striving with you to lead you to do just what He would have you do. He is striving to lead you to repentance, to lead you to believe, and is striving with you, not to secure the performance of mere outward acts, but to change your heart.'

"The Church, to a very great extent, has instructed sinners to begin on the outside in religion, to secure an inward change. I have ever treated this as totally wrong, and in the highest degree dangerous. . . . I think I may say I have found thousands of sinners, of all ages, who are living under this delusion, and would never think themselves called upon to do anything more than merely to pray for a new heart, live a moral life, read their Bibles, attend meetings, use the means of grace, and leave all the responsibility of their conversion and salvation with God."

I can not but feel, with Finney, that these characteristic teachings of Calvinism have sent thousands of people to hell. We shall have some specimen cases very soon in these pages.

REVIVAL AT READING.—EARLY PART OF 1830.

Finney went from Philadelphia to Reading. There were several German Churches, and one Presbyterian Church, whose pastor, Dr. Greer, secured the help of Finney. One of the elders of the Church was manager of a series of balls that was to extend through the winter. Finney told the pastor that those balls would soon be given up, or he would be shut out of the pulpit. He preached several days, and then appointed a meeting for those only who were anxious for salvation, and had made up their minds to attend to the subject at once. The lecture-room, nearly as large as the body of the church above, was filled. Finney stripped away their misapprehensions and mistakes, that they must simply use means and wait for God to convert them. He then called upon all who were willing, then and there, to pledge themselves to give up all sin and renounce it forever, and live wholly to God, and who were willing to commit themselves to the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus, to kneel down and do what God required of them. They knelt in vast numbers—people of all classes, rich and poor, high and low. The stillness of death came upon them, broken only by sobs and sighs and weeping, while Finney prayed.

Early one morning an able lawyer visited Finney, deeply concerned for salvation. He informed Finney that, when he was a student in Princeton College, he

and two of his classmates, under deep conviction, went to Dr. Ashbel Green, president of the college, and asked him what they should do to be saved. The doctor told them to read their Bible, and to pray God to give them a new heart, and to press forward, and "the Spirit of God will convert you; or else He will leave you, and you will return back to your sins again."

"Well," asked Finney, "how did it terminate?" "O," replied he, "we did just as he told us to do, until we lost all interest in the subject." Then, bursting into tears, he said, "My two companions are in drunkards' graves, and if I can not repent I shall soon be in one myself." Finney showed him that God could not do for him what He required him to do. God required him to repent, but could not repent for him; required him to believe, but could not believe for him; God required him to submit, but could not submit for him. He then showed him the agency that the Spirit of God has in giving the sinner repentance and a new heart; THAT IT IS A DIVINE PERSUASION; that the Spirit leads him to see his sins, urges him to give them up, and to flee from the wrath to come. He presents to him the Savior, the atonement, the plan of salvation, and urges him to accept it.

He soon knelt down and gave his heart to God, and then said: "O! if Dr. Green had only told us this that you have told me, we should all have been converted immediately. But my friends are lost; and what a wonder of mercy it is that I am saved!"

One night a wicked man was so convicted under the preaching that he went home and got in such agony that his family thought he would die, and dispatched a messenger for Finney in the face of a terrific storm. He could hear the man fairly howling in agony

before he got near the house. "When I entered, I found him sitting on the floor, his wife supporting his head—and what a look in his face! Accustomed as I was to seeing people under great conviction, his appearance gave me a tremendous shock. It was indescribable. He was writhing in agony, grinding his teeth, and literally gnawing his tongue for pain. He cried out to me, 'O, Mr. Finney! I am lost! I am a lost soul!' I was greatly shocked, and exclaimed, 'IF THIS IS CONVICTION, WHAT IS HELL?' But I soon led his thoughts to the way of salvation, pressed the Savior upon his attention and upon his acceptance, and he found peace.

The elder who was managing the ball was converted, and his whole family, and the vast congregation. A distiller was converted, and ordered his distillery torn down.

The German pastors very generally opposed the revival. One of them told Mr. Finney that he had made sixteen hundred Christians in that city by baptism and giving them the communion. That was their only conception of religion. "It was held that, for the people to begin to think of becoming religious by being converted, and to establish family prayer, or to give themselves to secret prayer, was not only fanaticism, but was virtually saying that their ancestors had all gone to hell; for they had done no such thing. Some of their people got converted, but the pastors spoke very severely of those that forsook the ways of their fathers, and thought it necessary to be converted and to maintain family and secret prayer." How fallen the German Church is—a Church of form and ceremony without vital piety!

LANCASTER, SPRING OF 1830.

From Reading, Finney went to Lancaster, and remained a short time. The interest increased from day to day, and hopeful conversions multiplied. One night he urged the audience to immediate decision, and asked all to rise who would then and there accept Christ. He even pressed the thought upon them that, in an audience so large, it might be the last opportunity some would ever have to decide the question, and that they would then decide their everlasting destiny one way or the other. God would hold them to their decision. Many rose to their feet, and decided for God and heaven. Two men sat near the door, deeply agitated, but did not rise. On their way home they discussed the matter, one of them confessing that he was deeply moved over the fact that it might be the final opportunity. They soon separated at a corner. It was a very dark night. The man so deeply moved by the Holy Spirit walked but a little way when he fell over the curbstone and broke his neck. Called, but lost!

CHAPTER IX.

REVIVALS IN COLUMBIA, NEW YORK CITY, ROCHESTER, AUBURN, BUFFALO, PROVIDENCE, AND BOSTON.

1830-1832.

In midsummer of 1830, Finney was urged to hold meetings in Columbia, N. Y. There was a large German Church there, only about ten of whom knew what it was to have a change of heart. The young pastor had studied theology under a German Doctor of Divinity. One of his fellow-students was religiously inclined, and used to pray in his closet. Their teacher suspected this, and in some way came to a knowledge of the fact. He warned the young man against it as a very dangerous practice, and said he would become insane if he persisted in it, and he should be blamed himself for allowing a student to take such a course. Mr. H——, the young pastor, said that, until recently, he had had no religion. He had joined the Church in the common way of baptism and confirmation, and had no thought that anything else was requisite, so far as piety was concerned, to become a minister. But he had a pious mother, who knew better, and was greatly distressed that a son of hers should enter the sacred ministry, who had never been converted. Her prayers and influence brought him to conviction and

conversion; then his wife was converted. He then sent for Finney, and listened to his preaching with almost irrepressible joy. The congregation turned to God with one accord, and the revival spread until it reached and converted nearly all the inhabitants of the town. Galesburg, in Illinois, was settled by a colony from Columbia, who were nearly all converts of this revival. The founder of the colony and of Knox College, located there, was Mr. Gale, Mr. Finney's theological teacher.

NEW YORK CITY.

Anson G. Phelps, of New York City, since widely known for his great benevolent gifts, hearing that Finney had not been invited to the pulpits of the city, hired a vacant church in Vandewater Street, and sent an urgent request to Finney to come and preach there. He went, and preached with such power and success that, before three months elapsed, Mr. Phelps bought a church in Prince Street, near Broadway, and there Finney preached nearly every night for a year to crowded houses. Prominent lawyers and leading business men and vast numbers of people found God. A Church was formed having free pews, out of the converts who had no relation with any other Churches. Long before the year was ended many ministers in the city would have been glad to have Finney labor in their Churches.

Mr. Arthur Tappan, the philanthropist, formed a friendship for Finney while in New York that was lifelong. His brother Lewis lived in Boston, and was a Unitarian. He had read in Unitarian papers that Finney was a half-crazed fanatic, who had declared himself to be "the brigadier-general of Jesus Christ." This

and like reports were quoted by Lewis, who insisted on their truth, and offered to bet his brother Arthur five hundred dollars that he could prove them to be true. Arthur replied: "Lewis, you know I do not bet; but if you can prove by credible testimony that the reports about Finney are true, I will give you five hundred dollars. I make this offer to lead you to investigate. I want you to know that these stories are utterly unreliable."

Lewis Tappan wrote to a Unitarian minister at Trenton Falls, New York, and authorized him to expend five hundred dollars, if need be, "to collect such testimony as would stand in a court of justice." After months of the most diligent and painstaking search, the effort proved a total failure. It led to Lewis Tappan's conviction, conversion, and change from Unitarianism to the orthodox faith. All his remaining life he too was a devoted friend of Finney.

ROCHESTER, 1831.

Leaving New York City, in the summer of 1831, for a little rest with Mrs. Finney's parents, he was urged to labor in the Third Presbyterian Church of Rochester, whose pulpit was vacant. There was a considerable division at the time in the Church and among the Churches, making Rochester at the time anything but a hopeful field. Finney and his wife packed their trunks, and called the saints of Utica together to pray for Divine guidance as to the choice of field in which he should labor. Many were open. Rochester was the least inviting of them all.

The brethren were unanimous in the opinion that Rochester could not be named in comparison with New

York or Philadelphia as a hopeful field. This also was Finney's conviction, and they parted in the evening, he fully expecting to take the boat in the morning for New York. But before he retired to rest, when alone with God, he was impressed that it was God's leading to go to Rochester. In the morning the packet boat came along, and they embarked, and went westward instead of eastward.

Very soon the Christians began to unite. The wife of a prominent lawyer, a lady of high standing, culture, and extensive influence, was one of the first converts. She had been a gay, worldly woman, very fond of society, and deeply regretted the coming of Finney, as she was afraid that there would be a revival that would interfere with the pleasures of the coming winter. Her remarkable conversion produced much excitement among the class of people to which she belonged.

THE ANXIOUS-SEAT.

"I had never," wrote Finney, "except in rare instances, until I went to Rochester, used as a means of promoting revivals what has since been called 'the anxious seat.' I had sometimes asked persons in the congregation to stand up; but this I had not frequently done. However, in studying upon the subject, I had felt the necessity of some measure that would bring sinners to a stand. From my own experience and observation I had found that, with the higher classes especially, the greatest obstacle to be overcome was their fear of being known as anxious inquirers. They were too proud to take any position that would reveal them to others as anxious for their souls.

"I had found, also, that something was needed to

make the impression on them that they were expected at once to give up their hearts; something that would call them to act, and act as publicly before the world as they had in their sins; something that would commit them publicly to the service of Christ. When I had called them simply to stand up in the public congregation, I found that this had a very good effect; and, so far as it went, it answered the purpose for which it was intended. But, after all, I had felt for some time that something was necessary to bring them out from among the mass of the ungodly to a public renunciation of their evil ways and a public committal of themselves to God. At Rochester I first introduced this measure."

A few days after the conversion of the prominent lady above referred to, he made such a call upon all who were willing to renounce their sins and give themselves to God, to come forward to certain seats, which he requested to be vacated, and offer themselves up to God, while he made them subjects of prayer. A great number came, among them some very prominent people. "It was soon seen that the Lord was aiming at the highest classes of society. My meetings soon became thronged with that class. The lawyers, physicians, merchants, and indeed all the most intelligent people, became more and more interested, and more and more easily influenced." "A large number of the lawyers, nearly all the judges, bankers, merchants, master mechanics, and leading men and women in the city were converted." The spirit of prayer in this revival was wonderful. "The spirit of prayer was poured out so powerfully that some persons staid away from public services to pray, being unable to restrain their feelings under preaching."

A Mr. Abel Clary was converted in the same revival with Finney, and had been licensed to preach. But his spirit of prayer was such, he was so burdened with the souls of men, that he was not able to preach much, his whole time and strength being given to prayer. The burden of his soul would frequently be so great that he was unable to stand, and he would writhe and groan in agony. He was at Rochester some days praying for Finney before Finney knew he was there. The man with whom he lived said to Finney: "He can not go to the meetings. He prays nearly all the time, night and day, and in such an agony of mind that I do not know what to make of it. Sometimes he can not even stand on his knees, but will lie prostrate on the floor, and groan and pray in a manner that quite astonishes me." Father Nash and three deacons were also, in much the same manner, giving themselves up to prayer for Finney.

Finney's mighty preaching, and all this prevailing prayer, God blessed in a wonderful way. Ministers and prominent people came into Rochester from neighboring towns and cities, and even from other States, to see this mighty work of God, and went away carrying the revival fire with them. The work spread like waves in every direction. Finney would sally out to neighboring town and cities, and preach a few days, keeping Rochester as the center. Twelve hundred joined the Presbyterian Churches in the neighborhood, besides the vast numbers that joined other Churches.

But the greatness of the work was such that it attracted the attention of ministers and Christians in New England and other States, and the very fame of it was an efficient instrument in the hands of God of promoting the greatest revival of religion this country

had ever witnessed. Dr. Beecher said of it: "That was the greatest work of God and the greatest revival of religion that the world has ever seen in so short a time. One hundred thousand were reported as having connected themselves with Churches as the results of that great revival. This is unparalleled in the history of the Church and of the progress of religion. In no year during the Christian era had we any account of so great a revival of religion."

The opposition to Finney's work greatly subsided after the New Lebanon Convention, and grew less and less. At Rochester he felt none of it. Ministers, and even the most ungodly sinners, became convinced that the work was of God. He addressed the public school, and a great number of the pupils turned to God. It afterward was found that more than forty of them became ministers. The only theater of the city was converted into a livery-stable.

REVIVAL IN AUBURN.

Finney labored at Rochester six months. He was invited by Dr. Nott, president of Union College, at Schenectady, to go and labor with his students. Finney was so wornout with excessive revival labors that people thought he would die with consumption. But he started for Schenectady. The roads were so bad, and riding in the stage was so wearisome, that he stopped at Auburn to rest. It became known that he was in the place, and a large petition was drawn up and signed by a large number of influential men, the very people who in 1826 had opposed his work, begging him to overlook their former opposition, and beseeching him to stop and preach the gospel to them.

Finney felt that it was the call of God, and agreed to stay and preach four times a week,—all he dared to do in his precarious health. The second Sabbath he saw the solemn face of Abel Clary in the audience. He had come to pray for him, and did pray with the same mighty groaning of spirit that characterized his wrestling prayer in Rochester. One of the first men to the axious seat was the leader of the opposition five years previous. Nearly or quite every person who signed the petition was converted, and in all five hundred persons.

BUFFALO.

From Auburn he went to Buffalo. The work there, as at Auburn and Rochester, took effect very generally among the leading classes. Rev. Dr. Lord, then a lawyer, was one of the converts. One of the wealthiest men in the city greatly opposed him, virulently denying his position that the 'sinner's CAN NOT" is simply a "WILL NOT;" that "the only difficulty to be overcome was the voluntary wickedness of sinners; and that they were wholly unwilling to be Christians." This rich man greatly rebelled against such teaching, and insisted that it was false in his case, for he was conscious of being willing to be a Christian, but God did not make him one.

This man afterward was mightily convicted, and tried to pray, but found that he could not pray the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done." He then realized that he was at heart opposed to God, and did not want, and had never been willing to have, Jesus reign over him. He finally turned to God with all his heart, acknowledged Finney to be right, and afterward gladly

co-operated with him. From there Finney went, in the autumn, to

PROVIDENCE.

The work of grace began at once, and went forward in a most interesting manner. But, for some reason not given, his stay of three weeks was too brief to secure such gracious results as he had witnessed in other places.

At that time, in this country, denominational lines were very tightly drawn, and the Churches of all denominations did not unite and invite an evangelist to come and work in the city, as was done during the career of Moody. The age was not ripe for such movements. When Finney went to a city, he usually had to fight his way against bigotry, sectarianism, and denominational jealousy, as well as Calvinistic theology and ritualism, Unitarianism, Universalism, and the devil. There were, however, many interesting cases of conversion, and several of the men converted became life-long leaders of the Christian work in the city. Among other converts was the most notoriously beautiful young woman in the place. She finally became so deeply convicted that she came to Finney of her own accord, and confessed to him: "Had it not been for my pride and regard for my reputation, I should have been as wicked a girl as there is in Providence. I can see clearly that my life has been restrained by pride and a regard to my reputation, and not from any regard to God or His law or gospel. I can see that God has made use of my pride and ambition to restrain me from disgraceful iniquities. I have been petted and flattered, and I stood upon my dignity, and have maintained my reputation from

purely selfish motives." She thus acknowledged her fashionable, worldly wickedness, bowed to Jesus, and became a meek and humble follower of Christ. She afterward married a very wealthy man in New York City, but kept true to God.

BOSTON, 1832.

While Finney was laboring in Providence, the Boston ministers sent Dr. Wisner, pastor of the Old South Church, as a spy to watch the work in Providence, and report. It led to Finney's being invited to Boston. Dr. Lyman Beecher was pastor at Bowdoin Street Congregational Church. He was the man who, only five years before, threatened to fight Finney all over New England. His talented son, Edward Beecher, was pastor at Park Street Church. Fifty-seven years afterward, November 6, 1889, he wrote: "I was pastor of Park Street Church when Finney was first invited to preach in Boston, and I invited him to preach for me. He complied with my request, and preached the most impressive and powerful sermon I ever heard. . . . No one can form any conception of the power of his appeal. It rings in my ears even to this day. It met good results in all who heard him, and have ever honored and loved him as one as truly commissioned by God to declare His will as were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Paul."

I stop in the story to copy this opinion of Finney's preaching, because Edward Beecher's father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, was one of the most famous and powerful preachers of his day. Edward Beecher's younger brother, Henry Ward Beecher, filled the world with his fame as one of the mightiest preachers of

the centuries. Yet Dr. Edward Beecher, who had heard his illustrious father and his immortal brother preach a multitude of times, and was personally acquainted with all the other great preachers of his age, says of Finney's sermon, "IT WAS THE MOST IMPRESSIVE AND POWERFUL SERMON I EVER HEARD."

This confirms my judgment of Finney's preaching, that for matchless power to sway men for good he was easily the greatest preacher I ever heard; I think the greatest of the century.

It was this year that somebody invited Finney over from Boston to preach three days at Andover, the seat of Andover Theological Seminary. It chanced to be the time of the graduating exercises of the seminary. Forty-two orations had been prepared by the young men. Half of them, that conflicted with Finney's preaching services, had to be given up. Rev. Justin Edwards, D. D., then a favorite preacher in New England, on one evening was to preach a sermon before the alumni of the seminary. "There was a decided opposition to Mr. Finney among the professors and students of the seminary," says Professor Park, the most famous professor the seminary ever had. He thus describes the occasion and the preaching of Finney:

"Such was the fame of Mr. Finney that we were compelled to give up our exercises. Only thirty people gathered to hear the discourse of Dr. Edwards, and they adjourned. There were between two and three hundred preachers and students for the ministry in the audience. Mr. Finney's discourse was one which could never be printed, and could not easily be forgotten. The eloquence of it can not be appreciated by those who did not hear it. The text was 1 Tim.

ii, 5, 'One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' His sermon was just one hundred minutes long. It held the unremitting attention of his hearers, even of those who had opposed his interference with our seminary exercises. It abounded with sterling argument and startling transitions. It was too earnest to be called theatrical, but, in the best sense of the word, it was called *dramatic*. Some of his rhetorical utterances are indescribable. I will allude to one of them, but I know that my allusion to it will give no adequate idea of it.

"He was illustrating the folly of men who expect to be saved on the ground of justice; who think that they may, perhaps, be punished after death; but, when they have endured all the penalty which they deserve, they will be admitted to heaven. He was appealing to the uniform testimony of the Bible that the men who are saved at all are saved by grace, they are pardoned; their heaven consists in glorifying the vicarious atonement by which their sins were washed away. He was describing the *jar* which the songs of the saints would receive if any intruder should claim that he had already endured the penalty of the Divine law. The tones of the preacher, then, became sweet and musical as he repeated the words of the 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' No sooner had he uttered the word '*blessing*' than he started back, turned his face from the mass of the audience before him, fixed his glaring eyes upon the gallery at his right hand, and gave all the signs of a man who was frightened by a sudden interruption

of the Divine worship. With a stentorian voice he cried out: '*What* is that I see? What means that *rabble-rout* of men coming up here? Hark! Hear them shout! Hear their words: "Thanks to hell-fire! We have served out our time. Thanks! THANKS! WE HAVE SERVED OUT OUR TIME. THANKS TO HELL-FIRE!"' Then the preacher turned his face from the side gallery, looked again upon the mass of the audience, and, after a lengthened pause, during which a fearful stillness pervaded the house, he said in gentle tones: 'Is this the spirit of the saints? Is this the music of the upper world? "And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb be the blessing, and the dominion, and the honor, and the glory, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen."'

"During this dramatic scene, five or six men were sitting on a board which had been extemporaneously brought into the aisle and extended from one chair to another. I was sitting with them. The board actually shook beneath us. Every one of the men was trembling with excitement. The power of the whole sermon was compressed into that vehement utterance. It is more than fifty-eight years since I listened to that discourse. I remember it well. I can recall the impression of it as distinctly as I could a half-century ago; but if every word of it were on the printed page, it would not be the identical sermon of the living preacher." (Wright's "Charles G. Finney," pp. 71-74.)

This was a terrific blow at the doctrine of Universalism as Finney found it, which then saturated New England thought and life, and still curses it. No won

der that under such preaching Universalists were driven from their refuges of lies and bowed to Jesus, or else fled from the preacher's presence in dismay, to rave at and slander Finney.

Such a preacher at last was in Boston; perhaps it never heard a greater. Whitefield is probably the only one who can be compared with him for pulpit power. And here is his comment on the work: "I began by preaching around in the different churches on the Sabbath, and on week evenings I preached in Park Street. I soon saw that the Word of God was taking effect, and that the interest was increasing from day to day. But I perceived, also, that there needed to be a great searching among professed Christians. I could not learn that there was among them anything like the spirit of prayer that had prevailed in the revivals at the West and in New York City. THERE SEEMED TO BE A PECULIAR TYPE OF RELIGION THERE, *not exhibiting that freedom and strength of faith which I had been in the habit of seeing in New York.* I, therefore, began preaching some searching sermons to Christians. But I soon found that these sermons were not at all palatable to the Christians of Boston. This was new to me. I had never before seen professed Christians shrink back, as they did at that time in Boston, from searching sermons. But I heard again and again of speeches like these: 'What will the Unitarians say, if such things are true of us who are orthodox? If Mr. Finney preaches to us in this way, the Unitarians will triumph over us, and say that at least the orthodox are no better Christians than Unitarians.' It was evident that they somewhat resented my plain dealing, and that my searching sermons astonished and even offended very many of them. However, as the work

went forward, this state of things changed greatly; and after a few weeks they would listen to searching preaching and came to appreciate it. . . . We had a blessed work of grace, and a large number of persons were converted in different parts of the city."

It is evident, however, that Finney's preaching at this time, or at any of the four subsequent revivals in Boston, did not result in any such general movement as in some other places. At all of his five revival efforts in Boston "extensive revivals attended his ministry, and it is the universal testimony of the members of Park Street Church surviving from that time that the conversions were characterized by greater permanence than were those brought about in connection with the labors of any other revivalist whom they have had with them." (Wright's "Finney," p. 106.)

Finney, with his subtle discernment, detected that "*the type of religion in Boston was peculiar.*" It has been so for a century. The keen, intensely active, subtle intellect of the heart of New England must be matched by a correspondingly deep spirituality to be kept in true lines of thought and healthy religious life. If it is not, the Yankee intellect goes off, not into business and money-making only, but also into speculation in philosophy and theology. Under the excessive Calvinism of a century ago religion ebbed. Then there was a reaction, and Unitarianism and Universalism swept in like a flood. Boston and its vicinity have been the natural home and exploiting ground of every fad and fanaticism and species of infidelity ever since. Millerism, Spiritualism, Tom-Paine-ism, Christian-Science-ism, Swedenborgianism, Unitarianism, Universalism, Free-thought-ism, Free-love-ism, Agnosti-

cism, Skepticism, are all enthroned there, and all are flourishing. A Doctor of Divinity, a son of Massachusetts, once said to me, "You can not name an *'ism'* that has cursed American thought and life that did not have its birth or home within fifty miles of Boston."

All the advocates and adherents of this swarm of "isms" have associated together and intermarried. The religious teacher's lips are now sealed; he must not preach the mighty gospel of Jesus Christ in all its fullness, for if he should, he will be reflecting on Deacon A——'s Unitarian son-in-law, or Deacon B——'s Universalist daughter-in-law, or Deacon C——'s Spiritualist sister, or rich Mr. D——'s cousins or uncles or aunts, who are all Christian Scientists. They are all *such nice people*, and stand so well in Boston society, it must be that they are highly pleasing to God! Whoever was born in Boston was so well born that he does not need to be born again; especially, a diploma from Harvard or "The Boston Tech.," or Wellesley, is a "sure passport to heaven." It has therefore come about that there has been developed in the intellectual capital of New England a self-satisfied, self-complacent, self-admiring, broad-gauge, free-thinking, go-as-you-please, believe-what-you-will, we-are-all-going-to-heaven-together type of religion that Finney thought was PECULIAR. It did not want to be *"searched"* and probed until professors of religion got down to the core and marrow of spiritual things, and struck the rock for the foundation of their spiritual hopes. Nothing can save Boston* thinking from skepticism, and her piety from the dry-rot of indifference, but a mighty baptism with the Holy Spirit for righteousness and true holiness.

*For Beecher's and Finney's opinions of Boston, see last part of Chapter XII.

CHAPTER X.

LABORS IN NEW YORK CITY, 1832-1835—TRIP TO ITALY—REVIVAL LECTURES—OBERLIN.

FINNEY had labored ten years as an evangelist, with but a few weeks of rest during the whole period. He now had three children, and he could not well take them with him about the country. His physical strength was depleted by his incessant labors. He had a call to resume labor in New York City as a pastor, and, after prayer, he accepted it.

Mr. Lewis Tappan, with other Christian brethren, leased the Chatham Street Theater, and fitted it up for a church. There were three rooms connected with the front part of the theater, large and long, which were fitted up for prayer-meetings and for a lecture-room. They were exceedingly convenient. There were three tiers of galleries, and those rooms were connected with the galleries respectively, one above the other.

"I instructed my Church members to scatter themselves over the whole house, and to keep their eyes open in regard to any that were seriously affected under the preaching, and, if possible, to detain them after preaching for conversation and prayer. They were true to their teaching, and were on the lookout at every meeting to see with whom the Word of God

was taking effect; and they had faith enough to dismiss their fears and to speak to any whom they saw to be affected by the Word. In this way the conversion of a great many souls was secured. They would invite them into those rooms, and there we would converse and pray with them, and thus gather up the results of every sermon."

Finney began his work in the spring of 1832. "The Spirit of the Lord was immediately poured out, and there was an extensive revival that spring and summer. About midsummer the cholera appeared in New York for the first time, and the worst visitation of that scourge the city ever had. At one time Finney counted from his door five hearses drawn up in sight. He remained in the city all summer, not being willing to leave his people while the mortality was so great. He finally had it himself, and the means used for his recovery gave his system a terrible shock, from which it took him a long time to recover. The next spring he was able to preach again, and had a meeting twenty nights in succession, all his strength would permit. The Spirit was immediately poured out, and there were five hundred conversions known to them. His Church became so large that a colony was sent out to form another free Church.

"The Church were a praying, working people. They were thoroughly united, were well trained in regard to labors for the conversion of sinners, and were a most devoted and efficient Church of Christ. They would go out into the highways and hedges, and bring people to hear preaching, whenever they were called upon to do so. Both men and women would undertake this work. Our ladies were not afraid to go and gather in all classes.

"When I first went to Chatham Street Chapel, I informed the brethren that I did not wish to fill up the house with Christians from other Churches, as my object was to gather from the world. I wanted to secure the conversion of the ungodly to the utmost possible extent. We therefore gave ourselves to labor for that class of persons, and, by the blessing of God, with good success."

Whenever his Church got too large from the great number of converts, he would send out another colony to form a new Church. In three years there were seven churches with free seats that had grown out of his revival work, and formed from his converts. He wrote, "A more harmonious, prayerful, and efficient people I never knew than were the members of those *free Churches*."

Towards the close of this period, Finney became so dissatisfied with the difficulties of administering discipline through the Presbyterian forms of procedure that his friends decided on organizing a Congregational Church, and proceeded to build the Broadway Tabernacle, with the understanding that Finney should be pastor. Finney then took his dismission from the Presbytery, and entered the Congregational ministry. He was a Presbyterian only by accident. Their Confession he never did accept, and their method of conducting discipline was cumbersome. He found his congenial home among Congregationalists. Broadway Tabernacle, under Finney, Dr. Joseph P. Thompson, and Dr. William M. Taylor, has been one of the most prominent and efficient Churches in America.

It was found that the *New York Observer*, the Presbyterian religious weekly of New York City, was favorable to Mr. Nettleton in his relentless opposition to

Finney, and would print all articles on his side, but, with the characteristic unfairness of so many papers, both secular and religious, would print nothing on the other side in reply. The friends of Finney and the great revival movement grew tired of incessant misrepresentation and abuse. Judge Jonas Platt, of the Supreme Court, and others, met with Finney, and projected a rival paper, the *New York Evangelist*, through whose columns the friends of revivals and moral reforms might communicate with the public. After trial of two or three editors, Rev. Joshua Leavitt was called to the editorial chair. The paper, through Finney's influence, soon had a great circulation.

In January, 1834, Finney's health was again breaking, and he took a sea-voyage to the Mediterranean for his health. He spent some weeks at Malta and Sicily. Mr. Leavitt had espoused the cause of the slave. Mr. Finney watched the discussion with a good deal of attention and anxiety, and when embarking for his voyage he admonished him to be careful, and not go too fast in the discussion of the anti-slavery question, lest he should destroy his paper. On his homeward voyage his mind became exceedingly exercised on the question of revivals. "I feared," he wrote, "that they would decline throughout the country; I feared that the opposition that had been made to them had grieved the Holy Spirit. My own health, it appeared to me, had nearly or quite broken down, and I knew of no other evangelist that would take the field and aid pastors in revival work. This view of the subject distressed me so that one day I found myself unable to rest. My soul was in an utter agony. I spent the entire day in prayer in my stateroom, or walking the deck in intense agony, in view

of the state of things. In fact, I felt crushed with the burden that was on my soul. There was no one on board to whom I could open my mind or say a word. It was the spirit of prayer that was upon me; that which I had often experienced in kind, but perhaps never before to such a degree, for so long a time. I besought the Lord to go on with His work, and to provide Himself with such instrumentalities as were necessary. It was a long summer day in the early part of July. After a day of unspeakable wrestling and agony of soul, just at midnight the subject cleared up to my mind. The Spirit led me to believe that all would come out right, and that God had yet a work for me to do; that I might be at rest; that the Lord would go forward with His work, and give me strength to take any part in it that He desired. But I had not the least idea what course His providence would take."

We shall see how strangely and amazingly the Lord answered his prayers. When he reached New York, he found that his friends and others had held a meeting on the Fourth of July, and had an address on the subject of slaveholding. It was the first of a long series of mobs got up in the interest of slavery. The story had been circulated by sons of Belial that Broadway Tabernacle was to be "an amalgamation Church," in which colored and white people were to be compelled to sit together, promiscuously, over the house. Some wretch set the Tabernacle on fire, and burned the roof off when it had gone well on toward completion. The firemen were in such a state of mind that they refused to put the fire out. Meantime Mr. Leavitt had not been as prudent as Finney had cautioned him to be, and had gone so far ahead of public intelligence and feeling on the subject of slavery that his subscrip-

tion-list was falling off at the rate of fifty or sixty a day. His greeting words to Finney were: "I have ruined the *Evangelist*. Unless you do something at once to restore the *Evangelist*, it can only run till January." Finney told him his health was such that he did not know what he could do; but he would make it a subject of prayer.

The necessity of that religious paper, that agony of prayer on the ship, and the following prayer in New York, probably led to the most effective work for the kingdom of Christ that Finney ever did. After a day or two, Finney proposed to deliver a series of lectures on revivals which Mr. Leavitt might report for his paper. Mr. Leavitt announced it in his paper the next week, and it had the desired effect. New subscriptions came in daily by the armful, much faster than they had ever fallen off.

Finney began the course of lectures immediately, and continued them through the winter, preaching one each week. The lectures were wholly extemporaneous, and averaged about one hour and three-quarters in length. Mr. Leavitt could not report in shorthand; but he took notes in an abridged form, and wrote out as accurately as possible, preserving the points and spirit of the address.

Finney wrote: "These lectures were afterward published in a book, and called 'Finney's Lectures on Revivals.' Twelve thousand copies of them were sold, as fast as they could be printed; and here, for the glory of Christ, I would say that they have been reprinted in England and France; they were translated into Welsh, and on the Continent were translated into French and German, and were extensively circulated throughout Europe and the colonies of Great Britain.

They were, I presume, to be found wherever the English language was spoken. After they had been printed in Welsh, the Congregational ministers of the Principality of Wales, at one of their public meetings, appointed a committee to inform me of the great revival that had resulted from the translation of those lectures into the Welsh language. This they did by letter. One publisher in London informed me that his father had published eighty thousand volumes of them. These revival lectures, meager as was the report of them, and feeble as they were in themselves, have been instrumental, as I have learned, in promoting revivals in England, and Scotland, and Wales, on the Continent, in Canada, in Nova Scotia, all over the United States, and in the islands of the sea.

"In England and Scotland I have often been refreshed by meeting with ministers and laymen, in great numbers, that have been converted, directly or indirectly, through the instrumentality of those lectures. I recollect the last time I was abroad, one evening, three very prominent ministers of the gospel introduced themselves to me after the sermon, and said that when they were in college they got hold of my revival lectures, which had resulted in their becoming ministers. I found persons in England, in all the different denominations, who had not only read those revival lectures, but had been greatly blessed in reading them. When they were first published in the *New York Evangelist*, the reading of them resulted in revivals of religion in multitudes of places throughout this country.

"But this was not of man's wisdom. Let the reader remember that long day of agony and prayer at sea that God would do something to forward the work of

revivals, and enable me, if He desired to do it, to take such a course as to help forward the work. I felt certain then that my prayers would be answered, and I have regarded all that I have since been able to accomplish as, in a very important sense, an answer to the prayers of that day. The spirit of prayer came upon me as a sovereign grace bestowed on me, without the least merit, and *despite of all my sinfulness*. He pressed my soul in prayer until I was enabled to prevail, and through infinite riches of grace in Christ Jesus I have been many years witnessing the wonderful results of that day of wrestling with God. In answer to that day's agony He has continued to give me the spirit of prayer."

This book of Finney's has been to this day, for sixty-six years, the incomparable classic on the subject of revivals, and is still in circulation. The number of ministers it has instructed, and the soul-winners it has taught, and the revivals it has awakened, and the hundreds of thousands of souls that have, directly or indirectly, been brought to God through its influence, will never be known until the "books are opened" at "the great day."

On Finney's return to New York he resumed his labors in the Chatham Street Theater. The work of God immediately revived and went forward with great interest, numbers being converted at almost or quite every meeting. The Church flourished and extended its influence in every direction, until the Tabernacle in Broadway was completed. The Church then moved to their new structure, and the Spirit again came upon them, and they had a gracious revival, that lasted as long as he was pastor of that Church.

While in New York, Finney had many applications

from young men to take them as students in theology. He had too much on hands to undertake such a work. But the brethren who built the tabernacle had this in view, and prepared a room under the choir, which they expected to use for prayer-meetings, but more especially for a theological lecture-room. The number of applications had been so large that he made up his mind to deliver a course of theological lectures in that room each year, and let such students as chose attend them gratuitously.

But about this time, and before the course of theological lectures had begun, Lane Theological Seminary, in Cincinnati, to which Dr. Beecher had gone as president, broke up, on account of the prohibition by the trustees of the discussion of the question of slavery among the students.

When this occurred, Mr. Arthur Tappan proposed to Finney that if he would go to some point in Ohio and take rooms where he could gather those young men, and give them his views in theology, and prepare them for the work of preaching throughout the West, he (Mr. Tappan) would be at the entire expense of the undertaking. It touched Finney's heart, as he longed to train men to preach the gospel with power, and, besides, many of those students had been converted in the revivals led by Finney; but he did not see how he could leave the work in New York.

While this was going on, in January of 1835, Rev. John Jay Shipherd, the founder of Oberlin, and Rev. Asa Mahan, of Cincinnati, who had been chosen president of Oberlin, arrived in New York to persuade Finney to go to Oberlin to teach theology. The Lane Seminary students had agreed to go to Oberlin if Mr. Finney would be their teacher. There were already

gathered one hundred students in the lower department. The New York brethren offered, if Finney would go and spend one half of the year in Oberlin, and the other half in New York with them, to endow the institution, so far as the professorships were concerned, and do it immediately.

The trustees of Lane Seminary had acted "over the heads" of the Faculty, and, in the absence of several of them, had passed the obnoxious resolutions that had caused the students to leave. Mr. Finney said he would not go at any rate unless two points were conceded by the trustees. One was, that they should never interfere with the internal regulation of the school, but should leave that entirely to the discretion of the Faculty. The other was, that they should be allowed to receive colored people on the same conditions that they did white people; that there should be no discrimination on account of color. When these conditions were forwarded to Oberlin, after a great struggle to overcome their own prejudices and the prejudices of the community, they passed resolutions complying with the conditions proposed. The friends in New York were then called together, and in an hour they had subscriptions filled for the enodwment of eight professorships.

Even yet Finney hesitated to make the new venture. How could he give up that admirable place for preaching the gospel, where he gathered such crowds, and was the center of such mighty forces for good? He also knew that in the new enterprise he must face great opposition from many sources, and that it would be difficult to raise funds to put up buildings and procure apparatus for the college.

"Arthur Tappan's heart," says Finney, "was as

large as all New York, and, I might say, as large as the world. When I laid the case thus before him, he said: 'Brother Finney, my own income averages about one hundred thousand dollars a year. Now if you will go to Oberlin, take hold of that work, and go on and see that the buildings are put up, and a library and everything provided, I will pledge you my entire income, except what I need to provide for my family, till you are beyond pecuniary want.'"

This decided the matter. Finney agreed to spend his winters in New York with his Church, and to spend his summers at Oberlin. He arrived there in the early summer of 1835.

Forty years afterward, one of the ablest divines of Connecticut said to me that that was the mistake of Finney's life,—to leave that matchless work which he was doing in the heart of the Nation's metropolis, and go to a miserable hamlet in the woods of Northern Ohio to head a young college venture. We can not say. It is hard to measure such moral forces, even when taking a retrospect. It is certain that the acquisition of Finney, a man of world-wide fame and the world's greatest preacher, made Oberlin bound at once into world-wide celebrity. The twenty thousand students who sat under Finney's teaching and preaching, and then went everywhere to be leaders of men, probably did more to shape the character of the rapidly-developing Northwest, and save the whole country for liberty and righteousness, than any other single force. Forty-five years afterward, President Garfield, delivering an address to the students of Oberlin, declared that no college in all the land had more effectively touched the nerve-centers of national thought and life for good

than had Oberlin. Finney did more than any other man to make Oberlin a national power.

"His influence also made the attendance of students more cosmopolitan in character than that of any other institution. David Livingstone, while waiting in London in 1839 to set out upon his first missionary appointment, forwarded his first quarter's salary to a younger brother in Scotland, urging him to take the money and go to Oberlin for an education. This he did, graduating from Oberlin in 1845." (Wright, p. 158.)

We may say that the proportion of colored students was always very small, usually about four per cent of the whole. Amalgamation of the races was never thought of for a moment.

CHAPTER XI.

EARLY LABORS IN OBERLIN.

THE students left their comfortable quarters at Lane Seminary, in Cincinnati, and went to Oberlin to be quartered in "barracks" made of the slabs of saw-logs. It was called "Slab Hall." Other students thronged from every direction when they heard that Finney was coming. There was no room in Oberlin large enough for the congregations that would gather even in the wilderness to hear Finney preach. He was informed of the fact, and he brought with him a circular tent one hundred feet in diameter, furnished with all the equipments for putting it up. At the top of the center-pole which supported the tent was a streamer, upon which was written in very large characters, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." The tent was of great service. When the weather would permit, it was put up for every Sabbath. Several of the early Commencements were held in it, and it was used for holding protracted meetings in the regions round about.

It was understood between Finney and Mr. Tappan that the trustees should not know of his offer to help Oberlin, lest they should fail to make due efforts to collect funds. The work was being pushed rapidly in the matter of buildings when the great commercial crash of 1837 went over the country, and ruined most

of the wealthy business men. Arthur Tappan, and nearly all who had subscribed for the support of the Faculty, failed. It left the Faculty without funds for their support, and the college thirty thousand dollars in debt. To human view the college enterprise was ruined. The great mass of the people were utterly opposed to the enterprise because of its Abolition character. The towns around were hostile to the movement, and in some places threats were made to come and tear down the buildings. The preachers were opposed on account of theological prejudices. A Democratic Legislature tried to abrogate their charter.

The necessities of the school were then very great, and there was a mighty crying to God. Finney was so favorably known in England on account of his revivals and revival lectures, that a committee was sent to England to represent the college. They raised about six thousand pounds sterling, $30,000, and so canceled the indebtedness. Thus it was Finney's name and fame, under God, that saved Oberlin. His friends throughout the North everywhere did what they could; but, in spite of all, they had to struggle with poverty and many trials for a course of years, sometimes from day to day not knowing how they were to be provided for. Finney then relates this touching narrative:

"At one time I saw no means of providing for my family through the winter. Thanksgiving-day came, and found us so poor that I had been obliged to sell my traveling trunk, which I had used in my evangelistic labors, to supply the place of a cow that I had lost. I rose on the morning of Thanksgiving-day and spread our necessities before the Lord. I finally concluded by saying that, if help did not come, I should assume that it was best that it should not, and I would

be entirely satisfied with any course that the Lord would see it wise to take. I went and preached, and enjoyed my own preaching as well, I think, as I ever did. I had a blessed day to my own soul; I could see that the people enjoyed it exceedingly.

"After meeting I was detained a little while in conversation with some brethren, and my wife returned home. When I reached the gate she was standing in the open door with a letter in her hand. As I approached she smilingly said, 'The answer has come, my dear;' and handed me the letter containing a check from Mr. Josiah Chapin, of Providence, for two hundred dollars. He had been here the previous summer with his wife. I said nothing about my wants at all, as I was never in the habit of mentioning them to anybody. But in the letter containing the check he said he had learned that the endowment fund had failed, and that I was in want of help. He intimated that I might expect more from time to time. He continued to send me six hundred dollars a year for several years, and on this I managed to live." (Page 338.)

Think of this prince in Israel, who had turned many times more people to God than any other man living, being so poor after fifteen years of such prodigious labors that he could not buy a cow without selling his trunk! He was a careful and accurate and wise busines man. How different it would have been if he had been as pre-eminent in law or in the business world as he had been in the ministry! How free his hands must have been from the avarice that upsets so many evangelists! A great many people, and even a multitude of ministers, covet great usefulness in the kingdom and service of Jesus Christ. At least they think they do. But the careful observer will learn that all

those who are pre-eminently useful pay for it in self-sacrifice, and suffering, and want, and agony, and tears. The most efficient toilers in God's kingdom do not get the most of their wages in this world. Surpassing usefulness must be paid for; and most people are not willing to pay the price.

For three years Finney spent his summers in Oberlin, and his winters with his Church in New York City. Each winter there was a blessed revival in New York; there was also a continual revival during his stay in Oberlin. But his health soon became such that he felt he must relinquish one field or the other, to lighten his load. Strange to say, the interests of that young institution in the wilderness outweighed, in his mind, the metropolitan Church! He evidently had a great yearning to make great preachers and teachers out of those earnest students, and he evidently believed that he could there do the most for the kingdom of Christ.

During the last two winters of his pastorate in Broadway Tabernacle he gave a series of lectures to Christians, which were also reported by Mr. Leavitt, and published in the *Evangelist*. These also were published in a volume in this country and in Europe. These lectures were the result of a searching that was going on in his own mind. The Spirit of God was dealing with him on the subject of sanctification.

Here he gives a look into his own soul-experiences. He says: "Many Christians regarded those lectures as rather an exhibition of the Law, than of the Gospel. But I do not. For me the Law and the Gospel have but one rule of life; and *every violation of the spirit of the Law is also a violation of the spirit of the Gospel.* But I have long been satisfied that the higher forms of Christian experience are attained only as a result of

a terribly searching application of God's law to the human conscience and heart. The results of my labors had shown me the great weakness of Christians, and that the older members of the Churches, as a general thing, were making very little progress in grace. I found that they would fall back from a revival state even sooner than young converts. It had been so in the revival in which I myself had been converted. I felt it was due to the views they had been led to entertain when they were young converts.

"I was also led into a state of great dissatisfaction with my own want of stability in faith and love. To be candid and tell the truth, I must say, to the praise of God's grace, He did not suffer me to backslide to anything like the extent to which manifestly many Christians did backslide. But I often felt myself weak in the presence of temptation, and needed frequently to hold days of fasting and prayer, and to spend much time in overhauling my own religious life, in order to retain that communion with God, and that hold upon the Divine truth, that would enable me efficiently to labor for the promotion of revivals of religion.

"In looking at the state of the Christian Church as it had been revealed to me in my labors, I was led earnestly to inquire whether there was not something higher and more enduring than the Christian Church was aware of; whether there were not means provided in the gospel for the establishment of Christians in altogether a higher form of Christian life. . . . I HAD KNOWN SOMEWHAT OF THE VIEW OF SANCTIFICATION ENTERTAINED BY OUR METHODIST BRETHREN. BUT AS THEIR IDEA OF SANCTIFICATION SEEMED TO ME TO RELATE ALMOST ALTOGETHER TO THE STATE OF THE SENSIBILITY, I COULD NOT RECEIVE THEIR TEACH-

ING.* However, I gave myself earnestly to search the Scriptures, and whatever came to hand upon the subject, until my mind was satisfied than an altogether higher and more stable form of Christian life was attainable, and was the privilege of all Christians. This led me to preach two sermons on Christian perfection, which are included in the volume of lectures to Christians.

"That last winter in New York, God was pleased to visit my soul with a great refreshing. After a season of great searching of heart, He brought me, as He has often done, into a large place, and gave me much of that Divine sweetness in my soul of which President Edwards speaks, as attained in his own experience. That winter I had a thorough breaking up; so much so that sometimes, for a considerable period, I COULD NOT REFRAIN FROM LOUD WEEPING IN VIEW OF MY OWN SINS AND OF THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST. Such seasons were frequent that winter, and resulted in the great renewal of my spiritual strength, and enlargement of my views in regard to the privileges of Christians and the abundance of the grace of God." (Pages 340-341.)

Finney, in this same chapter on his early experiences in Oberlin, reveals the fact that when the trustees of Hudson College found that he had been called to Oberlin, they also called him to unite himself with Hudson College, twenty-seven miles south of Cleveland. A committee of that institution came to Cleveland and waited for days to meet him as he landed from the boat, and invite him to Hudson College, which

*Here was his mistake, as we shall show later in a chapter on his theology.

already had good buildings and a good start. He decided, however, in favor of Oberlin, and for years afterward that institution was the constant and bitter opponent of Oberlin.

There was, also, a Convention called to meet at Cleveland to consider the subject of Western Education and the Support of Western Colleges. Dr. Lyman Beecher was its moving spirit, and he worked up a spirit to shut representatives from Oberlin and Oberlin sympathizers out of the Convention. The object of the Convention seemed to be to hedge in Oberlin on every side, and crush it by a public sentiment that would refuse all support.

What a strange thing human nature is, even when endowed with more than an ordinary measure of wisdom and grace, if it is unsanctified! Dr. Beecher was induced to draw his sword against Finney at New Lebanon, and the Lord vanquished him. He then left Boston, and went to Cincinnati to reach and help save the great new West. But God sent Finney out to do a much more potential work than he ever did or could do, great as he was. Apparently moved by an unworthy motive, he again attempted to crush Finney's work. Again he met with an utter failure.

Finney wrote of the Hudson opposition: "We kept about our own business, and felt that our strength was to sit still; and we were not mistaken. We felt confident that it was not God's plan to suffer such opposition to prevail." And of the Convention opposition he wrote: "We kept about our own business, and always had as many students as we knew what to do with. Our hands were always full of labor, and we were always greatly encouraged in our efforts. Our policy was to let opposition alone."

A few years after the meeting of this Convention, one of the leading ministers, who was there, came and spent a day or two at Finney's house. He said among other things: "Brother Finney, Oberlin is to us a great wonder. I have for many years been connected with a college as one of its professors. College life and principles, and the conditions upon which colleges are built up, are very familiar to me. We have always thought that colleges could not exist unless they were patronized by the ministry. We knew that young men who are about to go to college would generally consult their pastors in regard to what college they should select, and be guided by their judgment. Now," said he, "the ministers almost universally arrayed themselves against Oberlin. They were deceived by the cry of Antinomian perfectionism and in respect to your views of reform; and ecclesiastical bodies united, far and near, Congregational, and Presbyterian, and of all denominations. They warned their Churches against you; they discouraged young men universally from coming to you, and still the Lord has built you up. You have been supported with funds better than almost any college in the West; you have had by far more students, and the blessing of God has been upon you, so that your success has been wonderful. Now," said he, "this is a perfect anomaly in the history of colleges. The opposers of Oberlin have been confounded, and God has stood by you through all this opposition, so that you have hardly felt it."

How true this was may be seen from the following facts: "The attendance of students increased from two hundred at the beginning of Finney's labors in 1835 (many of those being there because he was coming), to five hundred in 1840, to more than a thousand in

1850, and to an average of from twelve to fourteen hundred a little later.

Here we might pause to make an observation or two: First, it is futile business to fight one of God's chosen ones, who is minding his own business and faithfully doing the Lord's work, as Finney was doing. There is also a lesson here for us of Texas Holiness University. We started this school, just as Oberlin was started, for the extension of "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." They had "Holiness unto the Lord" on the streamer floating over their tent; we have it in our name and our charter, and in every aim and purpose of our school. So long as they were measurably true to their motto, they had unequaled growth, in spite of ecclesiastical or ministerial or Satanic opposition. If we, with our greater light and our more avowed purpose to spread holiness, are only unswervingly, unflinchingly true to our Divine mission, our present unparalleled growth is only a prophecy of what shall be. During this year of grace 1901, God has as signally poured out His Spirit upon us as He ever did upon Oberlin, saving or sanctifying one hundred and seventy-three people at our college altar, fifty of them during Commencement exercises; and our career is only begun. Ministers are opposing us; but God is raising up others to help us. We are passing our competitors at a canter; let us take a renewed vow of loyalty to God and holiness, and face the future with courage and hope; for it is ours.

Finney says: "There was a great number of laymen, and no inconsiderable number of ministers on the whole, in different parts of the country, who had no confidence in this opposition, who sympathized with our aims, our views, our efforts, and who stood firmly

by us through thick and thin; and knowing, as they did, the straitness to which, for the time, we were reduced because of this opposition, they gave their money and their influence freely to help us forward. I have spoken of Mr. Chapin, of Providence, as having for several years sent me six hundred dollars a year, until financial difficulties rendered it inconvenient for him longer to do so. Mr. Willard Sears, of Boston, took his place, and for several years suffered me to draw on him for the same amount, annually, that Mr. Chapin had paid. In the meantime, efforts were constantly made to sustain other members of the Faculty; and, by the grace of God, we rode out the gale." What blessings must have come to those men who fed Finney, as the widow nourished Elijah!

President Mahan, Professor Cowles, the Bible Commentator, Professor Morgan, teacher of New Testament Greek and Hebrew, and Finney, were all remarkable men in their way, prolific authors and writers and vigorous thinkers. Seldom does a young school gather such men around it and in its Faculty. They established the *Oberlin Evangelist*, and afterward the *Oberlin Quarterly*, in which they might freely discuss the great questions of the day in theology and morals. Finney being the professor in theology, most of the assaults were made upon him. But he writes:

"During these years of smoke and dust, of misapprehension and opposition from without, the Lord was blessing us richly within. We not only prospered in our own souls here as a Church, but we had a continuous revival, or were in what might be properly regarded as a revival state. Our students were converted by scores, and the Lord overshadowed us continually with the cloud of His mercy. Gales of Divine

influence swept over us from year to year, producing abundantly the fruits of the Spirit.

"I have always attributed our success in this good work entirely to the grace of God. It was no wisdom or goodness of our own that has achieved this success. Nothing but continued Divine influence pervading the community sustained us under our trials, and kept us in an attitude of mind in which we could be efficient in the work we had undertaken. We have always felt that if the Lord withheld His Spirit, no outward circumstances could make us truly prosperous.

"We have had trials among ourselves. Frequent subjects of public discussion have come up; and we have sometimes spent days, and even weeks, in discussing great questions of duty and expediency, on which we have not thought alike. But these questions have none of them permanently divided us. Our principle has been to accord to each other the right of private judgment. We have generally come to a substantial agreement on subjects upon which we had differed; and when we have found ourselves unable to see alike, the minority have submitted themselves to the judgment of the majority. . . . We have to a very great extent preserved 'the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' Perhaps no community has existed for such a length of time, and passed through such trials and changes as we have, that has, on the whole, maintained a greater spirit of harmony, Christian forbearance, and brotherly love.

"When the question of sanctification first came up, we were in the midst of a powerful revival. It was in 1836. Mahan had preached; Mr. Finney made some additional remarks on the subject, when the Spirit fell upon the audience. Many dropped their heads; some

groaned audibly. Many got new hopes. President Mahan himself received the baptism with the Holy Ghost. It became a great question among the students and in the Church. We had no theories on the subject, no philosophy to maintain, but simply took it up as a Bible question. It this form it existed among us as an experimental truth which we did not attempt to reduce to a theological formula; nor did we attempt to explain its philosophy until years afterward. But the discussion of this question was a great blessing to us and to a great number of our students, who are now scattered in various parts of the country, or have gone abroad as missionaries to different parts of the world." (Pages 349-351.)

CHAPTER XII.

REVIVALS IN BOSTON—PROVIDENCE—ROCHESTER, AND AGAIN IN BOSTON, 1842-1844—RENEWED BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY GHOST—LOSS OF HIS WIFE.

Mr. Willard Sears, of Boston, in order to have a pulpit open to revivals and the discussion of all great questions of reform, purchased the Marlborough Hotel, on Washington Street, and had connected with it a large chapel for public worship, revivals, and reform meetings, that could not find entrance anywhere else. In 1842, Finney was urged to occupy Marlborough Chapel, and preach for a few months. He went, and preached with all his might for a few months. "The Spirit of the Lord was immediately poured out," and "there was a general agitation among the dry bones." "I was visited at my room almost constantly, during every day in the week, by inquirers from all parts of the city, and many were obtaining hopes from day to day."

Elder Knapp, the well-known Baptist revivalist, was laboring in Providence, but under much opposition. The Baptist brethren invited him to Boston, and he came. At the same time Finney's friend, Josiah Chapin, and others, were urging Finney to come to

Providence. It was a great trial for him to leave Boston; but, after seeing Brother Knapp and informing him of the state of things, he went.

PROVIDENCE.

The work in Providence began with great power immediately. The number of inquirers was so large and the congregations so crowded that he could not call them forward, as he had done in other places, and had to invite them to the large lecture-room below. From night to night, after preaching, that room would be filled with rejoicing young converts and trembling, inquiring sinners. It continued so for two months, when he started for home. Weary with labor and travel, he stopped to rest a day or two at

ROCHESTER.

As soon as it was known that he was there, the ministers gathered and insisted on his preaching for them. In the meantime Judge G——, one of the judges of the Court of Appeals in the State, united, with other members of the bar, in a written request to Finney to preach a course of sermons to lawyers, adapted to their way of thinking. The house was packed night after night, and Finney felt that he was getting his grip on the minds and consciences of those thinking men. "One night I arrived at a point where I thought it was time to draw the net ashore. I had been carefully laying it around the whole mass of lawyers, and hedging them in by a train of reasoning that they could not resist. Just at the close, as I was about to call for a decision, I missed the judge, who, as an influential leader, I was especially anxious to reach; and I was

finishing my address with a sinking heart, when I felt the judge pull at my coat. He had left his seat in the gallery, had gone down through the basement, and up by narrow stairs to the pulpit, and said: 'Mr. Finney, won't you pray for me by name? and I will take the anxious seat.' The congregation had observed this movement; and when I announced to them what he said, it produced a wonderful shock. There was a great gush of feeling in every part of the house. Many held down their heads and wept; others engaged in earnest prayer. The judge crowded around in front of the pulpit, and knelt down. The lawyers arose almost *en masse*, and crowded into the aisles, and filled the open space in front, wherever they could get a space to kneel. The movement had begun without my requesting it; but then I publicly invited any who were prepared to RENOUNCE THEIR SINS AND GIVE THEIR HEARTS TO GOD, AND TO ACCEPT CHRIST AND HIS SALVATION, to come forward into the aisles, or wherever they could, and kneel down. There was a mighty movement. We prayed, and I then dismissed the meeting."

The next day at two o'clock the basement of the church was filled with inquirers. A large number of lawyers were converted, Judge G—— at the head of them. This went on day after day. One lawyer made out a quit-claim deed of himself and all his possessions to the Lord in regular legal form, and handed it to Finney. Bishop Whitehouse, of Illinois, was then a pastor in the city, and seventy of his congregation were converted. His own heart had been previously blessed by Finney's revival in Reading. Finney speaks of his doctrines and measures used in this revival as follows:

"The doctrines were those I always preached every-

where. The moral government of God was made prominent, and the necessity of an unqualified and universal acceptance of God's will as a rule of life; the acceptance, by faith, of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, and in all His official relations and work; and the sanctification of the soul through or by the truth: these and kindred doctrines were dwelt upon.

"The measures were simply preaching the gospel and abundant prayer, in private, in social circles, and in public prayer-meetings, much stress being always laid upon prayer as an essential means of promoting the revival. Sinners were not encouraged to expect the Holy Ghost to convert them while they were passive; and were never told to wait God's time, but were taught, unequivocally, that their first and immediate duty was to submit themselves to God, to renounce their own will, their own way, and themselves, and instantly to deliver up all that they were and all that they had to their rightful Owner, the Lord Jesus Christ. They were taught that the only obstacle in the way was their own stubborn will; that God was trying to gain their unqualified consent to give up their sins and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their righteousness and salvation. The point was frequently urged upon them to give their consent; and they were told that the only difficulty was to get their own honest and earnest consent to the terms on which Christ would save them, and the lowest terms upon which they possibly could be saved. I pursued such a course as was calculated to strip them of every excuse, and bring them face to face with the great question of present, unqualified, universal acceptance of the will of God in Christ Jesus. Faith in God, and God in Christ, was

ever made prominent. The doctrine of the justice of endless punishment was fully insisted upon; and not only its justice, but the certainty that sinners will be endlessly punished, if they die in their sins, was strongly held forth. Sinners were taught that, without the Divine teaching and influence, it is certain, from their depraved state, that they never would be reconciled to God, and yet that their want of reconciliation was simply their own hardness of heart, or the stubbornness of their own wills, so that their dependence upon the Spirit of God is no excuse for their not being Christians at once.

"Sinners were never taught in those revivals that they needed to expect conversion in answer to their own prayers. They were told that if they regarded iniquity in their hearts the Lord would not hear them; and that, while they remained impenitent, they did regard iniquity in their hearts. I do not mean that they were not exhorted to pray. They were informed that God required them to pray in the spirit of repentance and faith; and that when they asked God to forgive them, they were to commit themselves unalterably to His will. They were taught expressly that mere impenitent and unbelieving prayer is an abomination to God; but that if they were truly disposed to offer acceptable prayer to God they could do it; for there was nothing but their own obstinacy in the way of their offering acceptable prayer at once. They were never left to think that they could do their duty in any respect, could perform any duty whatever, unless they gave their hearts to God. To repent, to believe, to submit as inward acts of the mind, were the first duties to be performed; and until these were performed, no

outward act whatever was doing their duty; that for them to pray for a new heart while they did not give themselves up to God, was to tempt God; that to pray for forgiveness until they truly repented was to insult God, and to ask Him to do what He had no right to do; that to pray in unbelief, was to charge God with lying, instead of doing their duty; and that all their unbelief was nothing but a charging of God with lying. In short, pains were taken to shut the sinner up to accepting Christ, His whole will, atonement, official work and official relations, cordially, and with fixed purpose of heart, renouncing all sin, all excuse-making, all unbelief, all hardness of heart, and every wicked thing, in heart, and life, here, and now, and forever."

Would that all the ministers who pretend to do revival work would commit these words to memory. Probably no more thorough work was ever done in preaching to sinners than Finney did. If more preached like him, we should not have so much "wood, hay, stubble," and other rubbish built upon the foundation of Christ, which will all be consumed in the testing fires of God.

Of lawyers he wrote: "I have always been particularly interested in the salvation of lawyers, and of all men of the legal profession. They were more certainly controlled by arguments, by evidence, and by logical statements than any other class of men. I have always found that, when the gospel was properly presented, they were the most accessible class of men; and I believe it is true that, in proportion to their number in any community, more have been converted than of any other class. A clear presentation of the law and of the gospel will carry the intelligence of judges and legal minds

. . . Several of the lawyers that were at this time converted in Rochester gave up their profession and went into the ministry. Indeed, as a general thing, lawyers take a more intelligent view of the whole plan of salvation than any other class of men to whom I have ever preached, or with whom I have ever conversed.

"Very many physicians, too, have also been converted in the great revivals that I have witnessed. I think their studies incline them to skepticism, or to a form of materialism. Yet they are intelligent; and if the gospel is thoroughly set before them, stripped of the peculiar features which are embodied in hyper-Calvinism, they are as easily convinced and as readily converted as any other class of people.

"Universalism, Unitarianism, and indeed all forms of fundamental error, have given way and fallen out of sight in the presence of great revivals. I have learned, again and again, that a man only needs to be thoroughly convicted of sin by the Holy Ghost to give up, at once and forever, and gladly give up, Universalism and Unitarianism."

BOSTON, 1843-4.

When Finney was in Boston in 1842, Mr. Miller was in the city, creating no little excitement by his lectures on the second advent of Christ. He held Bible classes daily, several of which Mr. Finney attended. He procured his books and read them. The last time Finney visited his class, he was inculcating the doctrine that Christ would come personally and destroy His enemies in 1843. He gave what he called an exposition of the prophecy of Daniel on the sub

ject. He said that the stone cut out of the mountain without hands was Christ.

Finney invited Mr. Miller to his room, and called his attention to the fact that the prophet affirmed expressly that the stone was not Christ, but the kingdom of God; and that the prophet there represented the Church, or the kingdom of God, as demolishing the image. This was so plain that Mr. Miller was obliged to acknowledge that that was indeed a fact, and that it was not Christ that was going to destroy those nations, but the kingdom of God. "I then asked him if he supposed that the kingdom of God would destroy those nations, in the sense that he taught that they would be destroyed, with the sword or with making war upon them? He said, No, he could not believe that. I then inquired: 'Is it not the overthrow of the governments that is intended, instead of the destruction of the people? and is not this to be done by the influence of the Church of God in enlightening their minds by the gospel? And if this is the meaning, where is the foundation of your teaching, that, at a certain time, Christ is coming in person to destroy all the peoples of the earth?' I said to him: 'Now, this is fundamental to your teaching. This is the great point to which you call attention in your classes; and here is a manifest error, the very words of the prophet teaching the direct opposite to what you teach.'

"But it was vain to reason with him and his followers at that time. Believing, as they most certainly did, that the advent of Christ was at hand, it was no wonder that they were too wild with excitement to be reasoned with to any purpose."

Finney was again called to Boston in 1843, and he makes an extended comment on the peculiar char-

acteristics of Boston, which have already been noticed in the close of Chapter IX:

"The excitement of Millerism had blown over; but many forms of error prevailed among the people. Indeed, I have found that to be true of Boston of which Dr. Beecher assured me the first winter I labored there. He said to me: 'Mr. Finney, you can not labor here as you do anywhere else. You have got to pursue a different course, and begin at the foundation; for Unitarianism is a system of denials, and under its teaching the foundations of Christianity are fallen away. You can not take anything for granted; for the Unitarians and the Universalists have destroyed the foundations, and the people are all afloat. The masses have no settled opinions, and every "lo here" or "lo there" finds a hearing; and almost any conceivable form of error may get a footing.'

"I have since found this to be true to a greater extent than in any other field in which I have ever labored. The mass of the people in Boston are more unsettled in their religious convictions than in any other place that I have ever labored in, notwithstanding their intelligence; for they are surely a very intelligent people on every other subject but that of religion. It is extremely difficult to make religious truths lodge in their minds, because the influence of Unitarian teaching has been to lead them to call in question all the principal doctrines of the Bible. Their system is one of denials. Their theology is negative. They deny almost everything, and affirm almost nothing. In such a field error finds the ears of the people open, and the most irrational views on religious subjects come to be held by a great many people." (Pages 370-372.)

"This winter was spent mostly in preaching to professed Christians, and many of them were greatly blessed in their souls. I felt very confident that, unless the foundations could be relaid in some sense, and Christians in Boston took on a higher type of Christian living, they never could prevail against Unitarianism. All that could be accomplished by discussion had been accomplished. I felt that what Unitarians needed was to see Christians live out the pure gospel of Christ. THEY NEEDED TO HEAR THEM SAY, AND PROVE WHAT THEY SAID BY THEIR LIVES, THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS A DIVINE SAVIOR, AND ABLE TO SAVE THEM FROM ALL SIN. In other words, they needed the doctrine and experience of sanctification or holiness.

"The orthodox Churches there are too formal; they are in bondage to certain ways; they are afraid of measures, afraid to launch forth in all freedom, in the use of means to save souls. They have always seemed to me to be in bondage in their prayers, insomuch that what I call the spirit of prayer I have seldom witnessed in Boston. The ministers and deacons of the Churches, though good men, are afraid of what the Unitarians will say, if, in their measures to promote religion, they launch out in such a way as to wake the people up. Everything must be done in a certain way. The Holy Spirit is grieved by their yielding to such a bondage.

"I have labored in Boston in five powerful revivals of religion, and I must express it as my sincere conviction that the greatest difficulty in the way of overcoming all forms of error is the timidity of Christians and Churches. Knowing, as they do, that they are constantly exposed to the criticism of the Unitarians, they have become overcautious. Their faith has been depressed. . . . The doctrine of endless punish-

ment, the necessity of entire sanctification, or the giving up of all sin, as a condition of salvation, are not held forth with that frequency and power that are indispensable to the salvation of that city." (Pages 384-385.)

"During the winter the Lord gave my own soul a very thorough overhauling and a *fresh baptism of His Spirit.* My mind was greatly drawn out in prayer for a long time; as, indeed, it has always been when I have labored in Boston. But this winter in particular my mind was exercised on the question of personal holiness; and in respect to the state of the Church and their want of power with God; the weakness of the orthodox Churches in Boston, the weakness of their faith, and their want of power in the midst of such a community.

"I gave myself to a great deal of prayer. I rose at four o'clock in the morning, and immediately went to my study and engaged in prayer. I frequently prayed till the gong called to breakfast at eight o'clock. . . . I had a great struggle to consecrate myself to God in a higher sense than I had ever before seen to be my duty, or conceived as possible. I had often before laid my whole family on the altar of God, and left them to be disposed of at His discretion. But at this time I had a great struggle about giving up my wife to the will of God. She was in very feeble health, and it was very evident that she could not live long. I had never before seen so clearly what was implied in laying her and all that I possessed upon the altar of God; and for hours I struggled upon my knees to give her up unqualifiedly to the will of God. But I found myself unable to do it. I was so shocked and surprised at this that I perspired profusely with agony.

I struggled and prayed until I was exhausted, and found myself entirely unable to give her altogether up to God's will in such a way as to make no objection to His disposing of her just as He pleased.

"This troubled me much. I wrote to my wife, telling her what an experience I had had, and the concern I felt at not being willing to commit her to the perfect will of God. The bitterness of death seemed, for a few moments, to possess me at the thought that my religion might be of the sensibility only. But I was enabled, after struggling a few moments with this fiery dart of Satan, to fall back in a deeper sense than I had ever done before upon the infinitely blessed and perfect will of God. I then told the Lord that I had such confidence in Him that I felt perfectly willing to give myself, my wife, and my family, all to be disposed of according to His own wisdom. I then had a deeper view of what was implied in consecration to God than ever before. I spent a long time upon my knees in considering the matter all over, and giving up everything to the will of God: the interests of the Church, the progress of religion, the conversion of the world, and the salvation or damnation of my own soul, as the will of God might decide. Indeed, I recollect that I went so far as to say to the Lord with all my heart that He might do anything with me or mine to which His blessed will could consent; that I had such perfect confidence in His goodness and love as to believe that He could consent to do nothing to which I could object. I felt a kind of holy boldness in telling Him to do with me just as seemed to Him good; that He could not do anything that was not perfectly wise and good, and therefore I had the best of grounds for accepting whatever He could consent to in respect to

me and mine. So deep and perfect a resting in the will of God I had never before known. . . . This sprung a vein of joy in my mind that kept developing more and more, for weeks and months, and, indeed, I may say for years. For my mind was too full of joy to feel much exercised with anxiety on any subject. My prayer that had been so fervent and protracted during so long a period, seemed all to run out into, 'Thy will be done.' What I had been praying for, for myself, I had received in a way that I least expected. HOLINESS TO THE LORD SEEMED TO BE INSCRIBED ON ALL THE EXERCISES OF MY MIND. I had such strong faith that God would accomplish all His perfect will, that I could not be careful about anything. The great anxieties about which my mind had been exercised were set aside, so that for a long time, when I went to God to commune with Him, I would fall on my knees and find it impossible to ask for anything with any earnestness, except that His will might be done in earth as it is done in heaven. My prayers were swallowed up in that; and I OFTEN FOUND MYSELF SMILING, AS IT WERE, IN THE FACE OF GOD, AND SAYING THAT I DID NOT WANT ANYTHING. I was very sure that He would accomplish all His wise and good pleasure; and with that my soul was entirely satisfied. . . . At this time it seemed as if MY SOUL WAS WEDDED TO CHRIST in a sense in which I had never had any thought or conception of before.

"I began to preach to the people in Boston in accordance with this new and enlarged experience. My mind was too full of the subject to preach anything except a full and present salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. I spent nearly all the remaining part of the winter in instructing the people in regard to the full-

ness there is in Christ. A considerable number could understand me; but I found that I preached over the heads of a majority of the people." (Memoirs, pp. 374-379.)

To those of us who are acquainted with the literature of holiness, it is perfectly evident that this experience which Finney passed through in Boston was a sanctifying baptism with the Holy Ghost. That awful struggle; that dying to self and everything of earth, and sinking into the will of God; that dying of "the old man" for holiness, is a very familiar thing. We have witnessed these dying agonies of hundreds of people followed by the witness of the Spirit to heart-cleansing.

But some one will ask, "What about his experience at conversion?" When relating it in the early part of the book, we remarked at the time that it was anomalous and unparalleled that one should receive such a signal baptism with the Holy Ghost when too ignorant to ask for it, and without in the least expecting it. In the course of years, and in some one of the many trials of his life, that fullness of the blessing may have leaked away so gradually that he was scarcely aware of it, until he waked up with horror, to find that his will was not wholly submissive to God. Then his Lord, as he says, gave him "an overhauling," and a blessed renewal of "the fullness of blessing." O that Finney's philosophy of sanctification had been such that he could have led others into an experience like his own!

The state of heart into which he entered seemed to be an advance on his previous Christian experience that was abiding. He wrote: "I have felt since then a religious freedom, a religious buoyancy and delight in God and in His Word, a steadiness of faith, a Christian

liberty and overflowing love that I had only experienced occasionally before. My bondage at that time seemed entirely broken; and since then I have had the freedom of a child with a loving parent. It seems to me that I can find God within me in such a sense that I can rest upon Him, and be quiet, lay my heart in His hand, and nestle down in His perfect will, and have no carefulness or anxiety."

DEATH OF HIS WIFE.

"A few years after this season of refreshing that beloved wife, of whom I have spoken, died. This was to me a great affliction. However, I did not feel any murmuring or the least resistance to the will of God. But it was to me a great sorrow. The night after she died the thought of my bereavement flashed over my mind with such power! My brain seemed to reel, as if my mind would swing from its pivot. I rose instantly from my bed, exclaiming, 'I shall be deranged if I can not rest in God!'

"The Lord soon calmed my mind for that night; but still, at times, seasons of sorrow would come over me. One day I was upon my knees talking with God about it, when all at once He seemed to say to me: 'Did you love your wife for your own sake or for her sake? Did you love her, or yourself? If you loved her for her own sake, why do you sorrow that she is with Me? Should not her happiness with Me make you rejoice instead of mourn, if you loved her for her own sake? Did you love her for My sake? If you loved her for My sake, surely you would not grieve that she is with Me. Why do you think of your loss and lay so much stress upon that, instead of thinking

of her gain? Can you be sorrowful when she is so joyful and happy? If you loved her for her own sake, would you not rejoice in her joy, and be happy in her happiness?'

"I can never describe the feelings that came over me. It produced an instantaneous change in the whole state of my mind. From that moment sorrow on account of my loss was gone forever. My wife had died in a heavenly frame of mind. Her rest in God was so perfect that it seemed to me that, in leaving this world, she only entered into a fuller apprehension of the love and faithfulness of God, so as to confirm and perfect forever her trust in God and her union with His will.

"It seemed as if I knew what her state of mind was there, what profound, unbroken rest in the perfect will of God. I could see that that was heaven; and I experienced it in my own soul. It seemed as if I could enter into the very state of mind in which she was in heaven; and if there is any such thing as communing with an absent spirit, or with one who is in heaven, I seemed to commune with her." (Pages 381, 383.)

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND—REVIVALS IN HARTFORD, WESTERN, SYRACUSE, AND ROCHESTER

HAVING had repeated and urgent invitations to visit England and labor for the promotion of revivals, he embarked with his second wife (formerly Mrs. Elizabeth F. Atkinson, of Rochester), in the Autumn of 1849.

He first labored in the village of Houghton. A Mr. Brown, a wealthy and benevolent business man, was greatly troubled by the spiritual destitution of the community and the inefficiency of the Church of England to save the masses. He built a place of worship, and hired a Calvinist preacher, but nobody was converted. He repeatedly complained of it to his preacher, who finally replied: "Mr. Brown, am I God that I can convert souls? I preach to them the gospel, and God does not convert them; am I to blame?" Mr. Brown replied: "Whether you are God or no God, we must have conversions. The people must be converted." So this minister was dismissed. Another was procured, and Finney was sent for. He began the work. Mr. Brown kept open-house, and invited people in who came for miles around, sat at his table, heard the conversation, heard Finney preach, got converted or fired up, and

went away to scatter the revival fire in the neighboring villages. Every person for whose conversion Mr. Brown was especially burdened was brought in, and the masses were reached and turned to God.

BIRMINGHAM.

Finney went from there to Birmingham, where Rev. John Angell James, of blessed memory, was pastor. Earnest and evangelical as he was, he had fifteen hundred impenitent sinners in his own congregation. Mr. Roe, a Baptist minister, first had Mr. Finney in his church. There were soon a great many converts, and when they were received into the Church, and had a communion, by vote of the Church they laid aside their close communion, and invited Mr. and Mrs. Finney to sit with them at the Lord's table. "There were a great many conversions in that city; yet the ministers were not then prepared to commit themselves heartily to the use of the necessary means to spread the revival universally over the city. A Unitarian minister was converted and restored to the orthodox faith. He heard Finney preach on 'Resisting the Holy Ghost,' and wrote to him: 'I felt the truth of your arguments. Your appeals came home irresistibly to my heart, and that night on my way home I vowed, before God, come what would, I would at once consecrate myself afresh to that Savior whose blood I had so recently learned to value, and whose value I had done so much to dishonor. The peace of mind I now enjoy does indeed surpass all understanding. Through the grace of God, I shall trace up to you any usefulness with which God may crown my labors.'"

WORCESTER.

He next went to Worcester, and labored with Dr. Redford, who had been declared by some to be the greatest theologian in Europe. He reviewed Finney's "Theology," and wrote a preface to the English edition. The work was so successful in Worcester that some wealthy gentlemen proposed to erect a movable house of worship that would hold five thousand people, and move it from city to city for Finney to hold meetings in, independent of all denominations, a few months in a city. The timid ministers advised against it as a thing too novel. They induced Finney to decline the offer. It was doubtless the mistake of his life, and he afterward deeply regretted it.

LONDON.

He went from there to London, and labored in Whitefield's Tabernacle, which held three thousand people. Religion had so declined in London that week-day meetings were very little attended. Dr. Campbell, the pastor, said that Finney preached to more people during the week-day evenings than all the rest of the ministers in London together. Finney preached some time, and then asked for a room for an inquiry-meeting. Dr. Campbell thought there was not interest sufficient to warrant such a move; but Finney insisted. He finally named a room in the church that would hold forty people. "O," said Finney, "that is not half large enough!" The pastor expressed astonishment and doubt; but Finney knew too well the secrets of the Lord, and he said that, beyond a doubt, there were hundreds. Finally a room was mentioned in the neighborhood that seated sixteen hundred. "Just the room

I want," said Finney. Dr. Campbell protested that such a thing might be possible in America, but not in London. Finney replied: "The gospel is as well adapted to the English people as to the American people. I know what the state of the people is better than you do; and I have no fears at all that pride will keep them from responding to such a call." He made the call, telling Christians that they were not wanted at the meeting; and that careless sinners were not wanted; that only those were wanted who were anxious about their souls and who were disposed immediately to make their peace with God, and wished instruction on their present duty.

Dr. Campbell nervously and anxiously looked out of the window to see which way the congregation went. To his astonishment, Cowper Street was completely crowded with people pressing up to get into the room, which was packed. He looked amazed at the crowd, and especially at the amount of feeling manifested. Finney made them understand that God required of them to yield themselves entirely to His will, to ground their weapons of rebellion, make their submission to Him as their rightful Sovereign, and accept Jesus as their only Redeemer, then and there. "I had been in England long enough to feel the necessity of doing away with their idea of waiting God's time. London is, and long has been, CURSED WITH HYPER-CALVINISTIC PREACHING. After having laid the gospel net thoroughly around them, I then prepared to draw it to shore." As he was about to ask for them to kneel down and commit themselves entirely and forever to Christ, a man cried out in the midst of the congregation in the greatest distress of mind that he had sinned away his day of grace. Finney saw there was danger

of an uproar, and he hushed it down as best he could, and called on the people to kneel down, but to keep so quiet that they could hear every word of the prayer he was about to offer. They did, by a manifest effort, keep so still as to hear, although there was a great sobbing and weeping in every part of the house.

FIFTEEN HUNDRED SEEKING GOD ON THEIR KNEES AT ONE TIME! Many times after that in response to such calls many hundreds would seek God, and on some occasions as many as two thousand. And this went on week after week for nine months. People came from every part of London, walking several miles to get to the service, utter strangers to the pastor, and conversions multiplied until, beyond all doubt, they numbered thousands.

Dr. Campbell took Mr. Finney to a school to address the pupils, and a goodly number of them afterward joined his Church, a result of that service, and wholly unexpected by the pastor. "The fact is," says Finney, "that the ministers in England, as well as in this country, had lost sight, in a great measure, of the necessity of pressing present obligation home upon the consciences of the people. Ministers talk about sinners, and do not make the impression that God commands them *now* to repent; and *thus they throw their ministry away.*"

Numbers of ministers came into Finney's meetings, and got wrought up, and learned of him how to win souls. Before he left the city, an Episcopal minister had fifteen hundred hopeful conversions in his parish. When he left London there were four or five Episcopal Churches that were holding daily services for conversions, and the efforts had never ceased when he reached the city ten years later.

Mrs. Finney was invited to address a meeting where she expected only ladies to be present; but a number of gentlemen were present, and the results of the effort were so good that other appointments were made for her; and, without anticipating anything of the kind, she was drawn into the work.

Finney preached on confession and restitution a good deal, and multitudes were so pricked in their consciences that every kind of crime was confessed and thousands of pounds sterling were paid over to make restitution.

In April of 1851 the needs of Oberlin College called Finney home, and with great reluctance they left England, a great multitude of converts and friends following them to the ship, and waving adieu as they sailed away.

HARTFORD, CONN.

In the early winter of 1851-2, Mr. Finney was invited to Hartford, Conn. There was at the time a lack of unity between Dr. Hawes and Dr. Bushnell, the two leading Congregational pastors, on questions of theology. Dr. Hawes did not think Dr. Bushnell sound on the doctrine of the atonement. Finney was laboring in a third Congregational Church. The two brethren attended the meetings of Finney, and saw that God was manifestly present, and they agreed to lay aside their differences so as not to be a stumbling-block in the way of the salvation of men. From that time there was a good degree of cordiality, and the work spread through the city.

Finney found the people of the city very fastidious, and the ministers, especially Dr. Hawes, were afraid to call on sinners to come forward, and break

away from the fear of man, and give themselves publicly to God. But Finney broke away from the restraints, and invited people to kneel down and give themselves to God. Dr. Hawes trembled, but afterward admitted to Finney this: "I have always seen that something was needed to bring persons to a stand, and to induce them to act on their present convictions; but I have not had the courage to propose anything of the kind."

A great revival broke out in the public school. The boys came together one morning under such conviction that they could not study, and asked their teacher to pray for them. But he was not a Christian. It led to his conviction and conversion; and then he led his school to Christ. Six hundred of the converts joined the Congregational Churches alone.

SYRACUSE, 1852-53.

The next winter was spent in Syracuse, N. Y. Finney had not preached long before "there was a great movement among the dry bones." The leading members of the Congregational Church began to make confession to each other and public confession of their wanderings from God, and of other things that had created a prejudice against them in the city. Soon they began to draw the people, and had not room for them; the Presbyterian Churches were thrown open, and "conversions were multiplied on every side."

Mrs. Finney had great success laboring with the ladies in meetings by themselves. The Congregational, Presbyterian, and Baptist Churches were all greatly strengthened in spirituality and in numbers. A lady came to Mr. Finney deeply convicted for a deeper

Christian experience. She had heard the doctrine of sanctification preached, and her inquiry was how she could obtain it. He says: "I had a few moments' conversation with her, and directed her attention especially to the necessity of a thorough and universal consecration of herself and of her all to Christ. I told her that, when she had done this, she must believe for the sealing of the Holy Spirit." "In the afternoon she returned as full of the Spirit as she could be." The lady had hastened to her room, made a full and complete resignation of herself and everything into the hands of Christ, and soon received the fullness of the Spirit.

This is the first plain, simple, easily-apprehended direction we have found, for getting sanctified, up to this point in the "Memoirs" of his life. Now this was regular Methodist instruction, such as John Wesley, or John Fletcher, or Adam Clarke, or any modern Methodist teacher in the experience of sanctification, might have given. And the result was just what is being witnessed at a hundred holiness camp-meetings all over America, where people are getting sanctified by the thousands. It is passing strange that Finney did not learn from this incident how to teach and lead countless thousands into the experience of sanctification. But he did not; he rejected the Methodist theory, and therefore failed to have the success of the great Spirit-filled leaders of Methodism in getting people sanctified.

WESTERN REVIVAL, 1854-5.

After thirty years, Finney was back again, holding another revival in the place where he was starting in his public career as an evangelist, the town of Western, Oneida County, New York. A generation had been

born and had grown up to manhood and womanhood since the previous revival. Among the many striking things that occurred, one certainly is worth mentioning for the many lessons taught.

One young man, the son of godly parents, who had long prayed for him, years before had read "The Pirate's Own Book." It produced a most extraordinary effect upon his mind. It inspired him with a kind of terrible and infernal ambition to be the greatest pirate that ever lived. He made up his mind to be at the head of all the highway robbers, and bandits, and pirates whose history was ever written. But his religious education was in his way. The teachings and prayers of his parents seemed to rise up before him, so that he could not go forward. But he had heard that it was possible to grieve the Spirit of God away, and to quench His influence so that one would feel it no more. He resolved to do it, and his first business was to get rid of his religious convictions, so as to be able to go on and perpetrate all manner of robberies and murders without any compunction of conscience. He therefore set himself deliberately to blaspheme the Holy Ghost. He then felt that it must be that the Spirit of God would leave him, and that his conscience would no more trouble him. After a little while, he made up his mind to commit some crime, and see how it would affect him. To this end he set fire to a schoolhouse, and it burned to the ground.

When Finney began to preach he was exceedingly bitter against the preaching and the meetings. He committed himself with all the strength of his will against the revival, and declared that "Neither Finney nor hell could convert him."

It was all true; neither of them could. But he left

God out of his calculations; and the Holy Spirit so pressed him in answer to the prayers of the godly parents that he could stand it no longer. He came to see Mr. Finney with such a haggard look on his face that he appeared almost insane. His lips were blue and bloodless, and his whole appearance was quite alarming. His frame so trembled that he jarred the furniture of the room. He had stood out against his convictions as long as he could endure it; and he yielded to the Savior, and went to the church, while Finney, by his permission, told the people of his sin and crime. God used it to melt the people, and bring others to God. (Memoir, pp. 428-431.)

ROCHESTER, AUTUMN OF 1855.

In the latter part of 1855 a few souls in Rochester wrestled with God in prayer for a revival until they prevailed. They sent a most urgent invitation to Finney to labor in the city. He was somewhat reluctant to go. The brother who came after him said in great faith, "The Lord is going to send you to Rochester, and you will go to Rochester this winter, and we shall have a great revival." Finney went with hesitancy; but when he was on the field he saw that it was of the Lord. Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches united in the work. Soon another petition was sent him by two judges of the Supreme Court, two judges of the Court of Appeals, and the members of the bar, asking for a course of lectures to lawyers on the moral government of God. He complied with their request, and began with the text, "Commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." He showed—1. Every man has a con-

science; 2. Every man knows himself to be a sinner against God; 3. That, therefore, God must condemn him as a sinner; 4. That every man knows that his own conscience condemns him as a sinner. A skeptical lawyer had settled in the city, who, a little time before, had declared that he would never again attend a Christian meeting. He heard the first lecture, and admitted to a friend on the way home that he was satisfied that there was more in Christianity than he had supposed; that he did not see any escape from Finney's argument, and he should attend every lecture, and make up his mind in view of the facts.

Finney went on, night after night, pressing them; but left them shut up under law, condemned by their own consciences, and sentenced to eternal death. They were effectually shut up to the revelations of the gospel and to Christ as their only hope, whom he then offered them. The lawyers broke down, and yielded to God.

Thus in this, as in the two previous revivals, the work commenced and made it first progress in the higher classes, and then swept down through all ranks of people. Merchants arranged to have their clerks attend. The work became so general that, in all places of public resort, in stores and public houses, in banks, in the street, and in public conveyances, and everywhere, the work of salvation that was going on was the absorbing topic. The ladies in the city did their utmost to bring all classes to the meetings and to Christ. Many of the railroad men were converted, and so great was the interest among the employees of the railroad that much of the Sunday business was suspended that they might attend to the salvation of their souls. The work,

also, as in the previous revivals, spread to other villages and towns and cities far and near.

Finney made these comments that are full of significance: "I have never preached anywhere with more pleasure than in Rochester. They are a highly intelligent people, and have ever manifested an earnestness, a candor, and an appreciation of the truth excelling anything I have ever seen on so large a scale in any other place. I have labored in other cities where the people were even more highly educated. But in those cities the habits of the people were more stereotyped; the people were more fastidious, more afraid of measures. In New England I have found a high degree of general education, but a timidity, a stiffness, a formality, that has rendered it impossible for the Holy Ghost to work with freedom and power.

"When I was laboring in Hartford, a minister who had witnessed the great revivals in Central New York said to me: 'Why, Brother Finney, your hands are tied; you are hedged in by their fears and by the stereotyped way of doing everything. They have even put the Holy Ghost into a strait-jacket.' The minister was not irreverent. He simply saw and felt what I saw and felt, that the Holy Spirit was restrained greatly in His work by the fears and the self-wisdom of the people. I do not think the people of New England can at all appreciate the restraints which they impose upon the Holy Spirit in working out the salvation of souls; nor can they appreciate the power and purity of the revivals in those places where these fears, prejudices, restraints, and self-wisdom do not exist."

In an intelligent, educated community great freedom may be given in the use of means without danger of

disorder. Indeed, wrong ideas of what constitutes disorder are widely prevalent. Most Churches call anything disorder to which they have not been accustomed. Their stereotyped ways are God's order, in their view, and whatever is different from these is disorder, and shocks their sense of propriety. But, in fact, nothing is disorder that simply meets the necessities of the people. In religion, as in everything else, good sense and a sound discretion will, from time to time, adapt means to ends. The measures needed will be naturally suggested to those who witness the state of things, and, if prayerfully and cautiously used, let great freedom be given to the influence of the Holy Spirit in all hearts.

CHAPTER XIV.

REVIVALS IN BOSTON — ENGLAND — SCOTLAND, AND OBERLIN—CLOSE OF HIS LIFE.

In the autumn of 1856 Finney was again invited to Boston. He began in Park Street Congregational Church. The first sermon was directed to the searching of the Church: "For," he wrote, "*I always began by trying to stir up a thorough and pervading interest among professors of religion, to secure the reclaiming of those that were backslidden, and search out those that were self-deceived, and, if possible, bring them to Christ.*"

After the congregation was dismissed, the pastor said: "Brother Finney, I wish you to understand that I need to have this preaching as much as any member of this Church. I have been very much dissatisfied with my religious state for a long time, and have sent for you on my own account and for the sake of my own soul, as well as for the sake of the souls of the people." Finney had several protracted conversations with him. One evening, at a prayer and Conference meeting, he related to the people his experience, and told them HE HAD BEEN THAT DAY CONVERTED.

Some of the pastors thought it was injudicious to make a thing of that kind so public; but Finney thought it was manifestly the best means he could use for the

salvation of the people, and highly calculated to produce among professors of religion generally a very great searching of heart. The work was extensive, and there were many conversions; but he left in the spring of 1857, with the understanding that he should return in the autumn.

The winter of 1857-8 was the period of a great revival that prevailed throughout all the Northern States. It swept over the land with such power that, for a time, it was estimated that not less than fifty thousand conversions occurred in a single week. This revival had some peculiarly interesting features. It was carried on, to a large extent, through lay influence, so much so as almost to throw the ministers into the shade. There had been a daily prayer-meeting observed in Boston for several years; and, in the autumn previous to the great outburst, the daily prayer-meeting had been established in Fulton Street, New York, which has been continued to this day. Such prayer-meetings were established throughout the length and breadth of the Northern States. "I recollect," says Finney, "in one of our prayer-meetings in Boston that winter a gentleman arose and said: 'I am from Omaha, Neb. On my journey east I have found a continuous prayer-meeting about two thousand miles in extent.'"

It was evident that the Lord intended to make a general sweep in Boston. A noon prayer-meeting was started in Old South Church. It was crowded, and even multitudes could not get in. Daily prayer-meetings were established in other parts of the city. Mrs. Finney held ladies' meetings daily at the large vestry of Park Street. All that could sit and stand were crowded into it.

Finney preached all over Boston, Charlestown

Chelsea, and East Boston. The revival was so general and comprehensive that it was impossible to count converts. They flocked to Christ by thousands. All classes of people were inquiring after God everywhere. "This revival became almost universal throughout the Northern States. A Divine influence seemed to pervade the whole land. Slavery seemed to shut it out from the South. The people there were in such a state of irritation, of vexation, and of committal to their peculiar institution, which had come to be assailed on every side, that the Spirit of God seemed to be grieved away from them. There seemed to be no place found for Him in the hearts of the Southern people at that time. It was estimated that during this revival not less than five hundred thousand souls were converted in this country." (Memoir, p. 444.)

"It was a revival carried on very much through the instrumentality of prayer-meetings and personal efforts. The ministers did not oppose it; but the general impression seemed to be, 'We have had instruction enough until we are hardened; it is time for us to pray.' In answer to prayer the windows of heaven were opened and the Spirit of God poured out like a flood." The *New York Tribune* published several extras filled with accounts of the revival as it progressed through the North.

While Finney was laboring in Boston at this time, Theodore Parker, the famous Unitarian preacher, tried to block the wheels and throw odium upon the work. Mr. Finney made personal calls at Mr. Parker's house, seeking a private interview; but, though in the house, Mr. Parker declined receiving him. It was Mr. Finney's conviction that a conversation would reveal the error in Mr. Parker's theology. The effect of Theodore

Parker's harangues at Music Hall was highly pernicious. People who were deeply convicted at Finney's meetings would be turned back from Christ by Parker. Christians in all denominations noticed this, and they united on a day of special prayer that God would either convert him or in some way destroy his influence, so that sinners would come to God. Forty persons met in the vestry of Park Street Church, and thus prayed until they got the witness. One brother exclaimed, "I have it; God hears our prayers!" From that hour the scene changed. Parker became sick, and left the city for Europe in search of health, but never returned. He died at Florence. (Reminiscences, p. 40.)

Finney had been now leading mighty revivals before the eyes of the Nation for more than thirty years. His revival lectures had been widely read. Thousands of ministers had sat at his feet, and learned of him how to catch men. They knew how to go to work to bring about a revival, and how to deal with inquirers, as the ministry had never known before Finney's day. The Church and ministers had become so aroused in this country to the importance of the work, and God had so largely and universally blessed their labors, that Finney made up his mind to return and spend another season in England, and see if a similar movement might not be started that would pervade that country.

ENGLAND, 1858-1859.

He sailed for Liverpool in December. Mr. Brown came to Liverpool to meet him and induce him to labor again in Houghton and St. Ives. The minister there was very fond of wine and a great opposer of total

abstinence. He could not long endure Finney's preaching, but fled from the place. The people turned to God generally, and the converts organized a new Church. From there he went to London, and preached at Borough Road Chapel. The Church had been torn to pieces on the subject of temperance. The Spirit was poured out mightily, and "the work deepened and spread till it reached every household belonging to the congregation." The members of the Church made confession to one another, and settled their difficulties. Some years afterward, the pastor, Mr. Harcourt, visited Finney in America, and told him that the revival had continued in his Church up to that time, and that his people felt that if there were not conversions more or less every week, something was entirely wrong, and they were frightened.

The ministers in England were surprised that Finney in his preaching reasoned with the people. Dr. Campbell insisted that it would do no good. But the people felt otherwise, and they frequently told Finney that his reasonings had convinced them of what they had always doubted, and that his preaching was logical instead of dogmatic, and therefore met the wants of the people.

"I had myself," says Finney, "before I was converted, felt greatly the want of instruction and logical preaching from the pulpit. This experience always had a great influence on my own preaching. I knew how thinking men felt when a minister took for granted things that needed proof. I therefore took great pains to meet the wants of persons who were in this state of mind. I knew what my difficulties had been, and therefore I endeavored to meet the intellectual wants

of my hearers. When Dr. Campbell came to examine his converts, he declared, 'Why, they are theologians!' He then confessed his error."

A physician invited him to his home in HUNTINGTON for a little rest. He rested a few days only. The passion for souls moved him, a veritable fire shut up in his bones, and he could not keep still. He soon had a revival on his hands in Huntington, in which the doctor's whole family was converted, among them a skeptical son, who was also a physician, and so many other converts that they united together and built a great chapel for the proclamation of a soul-winning gospel, and formed themselves into a Church.

He went back again to London, and labored a few weeks more, after which he complied with the urgent invitation of Rev. Dr. Kirk, of the EVANGELICAL UNION CHURCH, a denomination that had grown out of a wide-spread revival awakened by the publication of Finney's "Revival Lectures," to come to EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND. He labored there three months, most of the time in Dr. Kirk's Church, one of the largest places of worship in the city. The Spirit was poured out as ever, and the pastor's hands were full of labors, day and night, among inquirers. Mrs. Finney's labors here also were greatly blessed. She, with Mrs. Kirk, established a ladies' prayer-meeting, which was continued many years. From Edinburgh Finney went to

ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND.

Mr. Finney found the congregation of Mr. Ferguson greatly hedged in by the denominational prejudices, which, indeed, Finney found very strong in Scotland.

But in time the barriers of prejudice melted away, and the spiritual blessings began to overflow into other denominations, and Finney got an invitation to other Churches. From there he went to

BOLTON.

It is a city in the heart of the great manufacturing district of England. It lies within the circle of that immense population that spreads itself out from Manchester. In this place the work of the Lord commenced immediately. The first evening, in the home in which he was a guest, the man's wife and two servants were converted. On the third day the vestry of a church was filled with inquirers, many of whom were converted. The largest hall in the city was secured and packed every night until not another person could get into the building. The Spirit was poured out in great power, and the brethren canvassed the entire city, going two and two, and praying, when permitted, in every house. Bolton was one of Wesley's favorite fields of labor; and they have always had there an able ministry and strong Churches. Their influence was far in the ascendancy there over all other religious denominations. Finney found among them most excellent laborers for Christ.

Here he makes a comment which I think holiness preachers and evangelists would do well to think about and pray over: "The Methodist brethren were very much engaged, and for some time were quite noisy and demonstrative in their prayers, when sinners came forward. For some time I said nothing about this, lest I should throw them off and lead them to grieve the Spirit. I saw that their impression was that the

greater the excitement the more rapidly would the work go forward. They therefore would pound the benches, pray exceedingly loud, and sometimes more than one at a time. *I was aware that this distracted the inquirers and prevented them from becoming truly converted;* and although the number of inquirers was great and constantly increasing, yet conversions did not multiply as fast as I had been in the habit of seeing them, even where the number of inquirers was much less. After letting things pass on so for two or three weeks, until the Methodist brethren had become acquainted with me and I with them, one evening, upon calling the inquirers forward, I suggested that we should take a different course. *I told them that I thought the inquirers needed more opportunity to think than they had when there was so much noise; that they needed instruction; and needed to be led by one voice in prayer, and that there should not be any confusion, or anything bordering on it, if we expected them to listen and be intelligently converted.* I asked them if they would not try for a short time to follow my advice in that respect, and see what the result would be. They did so; and at first I could see that they were a little in bondage when they attempted to pray, and a little discouraged because it so crossed their ideas of what constituted powerful meetings. However, they soon seemed to recover from this, because I think they were convinced that, although there was less apparent excitement in our meetings, yet *there were many more converted from evening to evening.*"

Finney remained in Bolton three months, and the work became so powerful that it broke in upon all classes, and even created a considerable excitement in Manchester, from which city people came in large numbers to attend the meetings. The owner of a cotton-

mill invited Finney to speak to his operatives. He preached to them, and there were sixty converted that afternoon. One evening he preached on confession and restitution, and a gentleman was moved to make a restitution of fifteen hundred pounds (about $7,500) in a case where he thought he had not acted upon the principle of loving his neighbor as himself. In another instance a man went away and made restitution of thirty thousand dollars. It was said that, had there been an audience-room large enough, Finney might have had an audience of ten thousand each night. In April of 1860 Finney went to

MANCHESTER.

There Congregationalism predominates over other denominations. The manufacturing districts have a stronger democratic element than other parts of England. But the Christian leaders in the city were not thoroughly united. To his great grief, Finney frequently heard expressions that indicated a want of real heart-union in the work. There was dissatisfaction with some of the men who had been selected to manage the work and provide for the general movement. The Methodist and Congregational brethren did not work harmoniously together as they did in Bolton. This grieved the Spirit, and crippled the work. However, the meetings were very interesting, and great numbers of inquirers were found on every side, and great numbers would attend inquiry-meetings, and were powerfully convicted and converted; yet the barriers did not break down, so as to give the Word of the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord free course among the people. (Page 469.)

Finney and his wife continued in Manchester until the first of August. He makes this comment: "Denominational lines are much more strongly marked in that country than in America. Church of England people rarely attend a Dissenting place of worship. Methodists will not freely worship with other denominations. The same is true of all denominations in England and Scotland. I am persuaded that the true way to labor for a revival movement there is to have no particular connection with any distinct denomination."

Finney's friends urged him and his wife to go to Wales and rest a time, and then come back to Manchester for another season. But they took an affecting leave of a multitude of converts and friends, and sailed for home.

Finney was now sixty-eight years old. For forty years he had been performing prodigous tasks, doing the work of several men. He was worn out, and needed rest. He came home, and found a vast number of new students and citizens and that there was a great need of a revival. The brethren were of the opinion that a revival effort must be made at once. Finney made it for four months, until the work bid fair to make a clean sweep of the college and town. He went home from one of the most powerful meetings he ever witnessed and was taken with a chill, which was followed by a three months' sickness.

Here, in the story of his life, Finney makes this striking comment, which, for a man of his years, was something wonderful: "Before I went to England the last time, I saw that an impression seemed to be growing in Oberlin that, during term time, we could not expect to have a revival, and that our revivals must be expected to occur during the long vacations in the

winter. This was not deliberately avowed by any one; and yet it was plain that that was coming to be the impression. BUT I HAD COME TO OBERLIN, AND RESIDED HERE FOR THE SAKE OF THE STUDENTS, TO SECURE THEIR CONVERSION AND SANCTIFICATION; and it was only because there was so great a number of them here, which gave me so good an opportunity to work upon so many young minds in the process of education, that I remained here from year to year. . . . I continued thus for many years after my heart strongly urged me to give up my whole time in laboring as an evangelist.

"While I was last in England, and was receiving urgent letters to return, I spoke of the impression to which I have alluded, that we could not expect revivals in term time, and said, *if that was going to be the prevalent idea, it was not the place for me;* for during our long vacation our students were gone, of course, and it was for their salvation principally that I remained. *I was free in saying that, unless there could be a change, Oberlin was not my field of labor any longer.*"

After 1860, Finney felt inadequate to the exposure and labor of attempting to secure revivals abroad. But he was abundant in labors at home, teaching theology in the college, preaching to the great congregation of fifteen hundred twice on the Sabbath, which he did for eleven years longer, until the summer of my graduation in 1871.

There was another very general and powerful revival in Oberlin in the winter of 1866-67. Two or three years after that, I saw, on a Sabbath afternoon, one hundred people, mostly students, come down out of the gallery and gather before the pulpit to be prayed for and give themselves to God, though there had not been

an extra religious service in the town. It was only the climax of a series of sermons of Finney, all purposely bearing toward that end.

Finney delivered a course of lectures to the theological students each year. He resigned his pastorate of First Congregational Church, Oberlin, in 1872, but still retained his connection with the seminary, and completed his last course of lectures in July, 1875, only a few days before his death. During the last month of his life he preached one Sabbath morning in the First Church, and one in the Second. He was then eighty-three years old, gentle and tender, rich and radiant in the beauty of goodness.

His last day on earth was a quiet Sabbath, which he enjoyed in the midst of his family, walking out with his wife at sunset to listen to the music at the opening of the evening service in the church near by. "He still stood erect as a young man, retaining his faculties to a remarkable degree, and exhibited to the end the quickness of thought and feeling and imagination which always characterized him." Upon retiring, he was seized with pains which seemed to indicate some affection of the heart; and, after a few hours of suffering, as the morning dawned, he died, August 16, 1875. Thus closed in peace a life of storm and battles with the powers of darkness; thus went to his reward the most potential preacher of righteousness and successful soul-winner of his century, or, so far as we know, of the Christian centuries.

CHAPTER XV.

FINNEY ON PREACHERS AND PREACHING.

"I AM an old man, and many of the results of my views and methods are known to the public. Is it out of place for me to speak freely to the ministry on the subject of preaching? A judge of the Supreme Court once remarked to me: 'Ministers do not exercise good sense in addressing the people. They are afraid of repetition. They use language not well understood by the common people. Their illustrations are not taken from the common pursuits of life. They write in too elevated a style, and read without repetition, and are not understood by the people. Now, if lawyers should take such a course, they would ruin themselves and their cause. Our object is not to display our oratory, but to convince the jury and get a verdict on the spot. Now, if ministers would do this, the effects of their preaching would be unspeakably different from what they are. They go into their study and write a sermon; they go into their pulpits and read it, and those that listen to it, but poorly understand it. They do not address the people, expecting to convince them and to get their verdict in favor of Christ upon the spot. They seek no such object. They rather seem to aim at making fine literary productions, and displaying great eloquence and an ornate use of language.'

"I never entertained the least hard feelings toward

my brethren for the roughness with which they often treated me. They really supposed that I should do much more good, and much less evil, if I should adopt their views. But I was of a different opinion.

"When I was preaching in Philadephia a Dr. ——, from Connecticut, came there, and heard me preach. He was indignant at the manner in which I let down the dignity of the pulpit. He insisted that I should not be allowed to preach till I had a ministerial education; that I should stop preaching and go to Princeton and learn theology, and get better views of the way in which the gospel should be preached.

"I had not enjoyed the advantages of the higher schools of learning; and so conscious had I been that I lacked those qualifications that would make me acceptable, especially to ministers, and I feared to the people in large places, that I had never had any higher ambition or purpose than to go into the new settlements and places where they did not enjoy the gospel. Indeed, I was often surprised myself, in the first years of my preaching, to find it so edifying and acceptable to the most educated classes. This was more than I had expected, and greatly more than I had dared to hope. But the longer I preached, the less reason had I to think that my error lay in the direction in which it was supposed to lie, by my brother ministers. The more experience I had, the more I saw the results of my method of preaching; the more I conversed with all classes, high and low, educated and uneducated, the more was I confirmed in the fact that God had led me, had given me right conceptions in regard to the best manner of winning souls. I say that God taught me; and I know that it must have been so; for surely I had never obtained these notions from man. And

I have often thought that I could say with perfect truth, as Paul said, that I was not taught the gospel by man, but by the Spirit of Christ Himself. And I was taught by the Spirit in a manner so clear and forcible that no argument of my ministerial brethren, with which I was plied so often and so long, had the least weight with me.

"I mention this as a matter of duty; for I am still solemnly impressed with the conviction that the schools are, to a great extent, spoiling the ministers. Ministers in these days have great facilities for obtaining information on all theological questions, and are vastly more learned, so far as theological, historical, and Biblical learning is concerned, than they perhaps ever have been in any age of the world. Yet, with all their learning, they do not know how to use it. They are, after all, to a great extent, like David in Saul's armor. A MAN CAN NEVER LEARN TO PREACH EXCEPT BY PREACHING.

"But one great thing ministers need, and that is SINGLENESS OF EYE. If they have a reputation to secure and to nurse, they will do but little good. Many years ago a beloved pastor of my acquaintance left home for his health, and employed a young man just from the seminary to fill his pulpit while he was absent. This young man wrote and preached as splendid sermons as he could. The pastor's wife finally ventured to say to him: 'You are preaching over the heads of the people. They do not understand your language or your illustrations. You bring too much of your learning into the pulpit.' He replied: 'I am a young man. I am cultivating a style. I am aiming to prepare myself for occupying a pulpit and surrounding myself with a cultivated congregation. I can not descend to your people. I must cultivate an elevated

style.' I have had my eye upon that man ever since, and I have never seen his name connected with any revival, and I never expect to unless his views are radically changed.

"It was very common among ministers, in my earlier years of preaching, to agree among themselves that if I were to succeed in the ministry, it would bring the schools into disrepute. Now, I never had a thought of undervaluing the education furnished by colleges or theological seminaries; though I did think, and think now, that in certain respects they are greatly mistaken in their modes of training their students. They do not encourage them to talk to the people, and accustom themselves to extemporaneous addresses to the people in the surrounding country while pursuing their studies. MEN CAN NOT LEARN TO PREACH BY STUDY, WITHOUT PRACTICE. THE STUDENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO EXERCISE AND PROVE AND IMPROVE THEIR GIFTS AND CALLING OF GOD BY GOING OUT INTO ANY PLACE OPEN TO THEM, AND HOLDING CHRIST UP TO THE PEOPLE IN EARNEST TALKS. They must thus learn to preach.

"Instead of this, the students are required to write what they call sermons, and present them for criticism; to preach, that is, read them to the class and the professor. Thus they PLAY PREACHING. NO MAN CAN PREACH IN THIS MANNER. These so-called sermons will, of course, under the criticism they receive, degenerate into literary essays. The people have no respect for such sermons, as sermons. This reading of elegant literary essays is not, to them, preaching. It is gratifying to literary taste, but not spiritually edifying. It does not meet the wants of the soul, nor is it calculated to win souls to Christ. The students are taught to cultivate a fine, elevated style of writing. As for

real eloquence, that gushing, impressive, persuasive oratory that naturally flows from an educated man whose soul is on fire with his subject, and who is free to pour out his heart to a waiting and earnest people, they have none of it.

"A reflecting mind will feel as if it were infinitely out of place to present in the pulpit to immortal souls, hanging upon the verge of everlasting death, such specimens of learning and rhetoric. . . . When men are entirely in earnest, their language is direct and simple. Their sentences are short, cogent, powerful. The appeal is made directly for action; and hence all such discourses take effect. . . . The impassioned utterance of a common exhorter will often move a congregation far beyond anything that these splendid exhibitions of rhetoric can effect. GREAT SERMONS LEAD THE PEOPLE TO PRAISE THE PREACHER. GOOD PREACHING LEADS THE PEOPLE TO PRAISE THE SAVIOR.

"My experience has been that 'honesty is the best policy' in a minister. . . . Men are not fools. They have no solid respect for a man who will go into the pulpit and preach smooth things. They cordially despise it in their inmost souls. And let no man think that he will gain permanent respect, that he will be permanently honored by his people, unless as an ambassador of Christ he deals faithfully with their souls.

"My habit has always been to study the gospel, and the best application of it, all the time. I do not confine myself to hours and days of writing my sermons; but my mind is always pondering the truths of the gospel and the best way of using them. I go among the people, and learn their wants. Then, in the light of the Holy Spirit, I take a subject that I think

will meet their present necessities. I think intensely on it, pray much over it, and get my mind full of it, and then go and pour it out to the people. One difficulty of a written sermon is, that after a man has written it, he needs to think but little of the subject. . . . Unless men will begin and talk to the people as best they can, keeping their hearts full of truth and full of the Holy Ghost, they will never make extemporaneous preachers.

"I have spoken of my method of preparing for the pulpit in more recent years. When I first began to preach, and for some twelve years of my earliest ministry, I wrote not a word, and was most commonly obliged to preach without any preparation whatever, except what I got in prayer. Oftentimes I went into the pulpit without knowing upon what text I should speak or a word that I should say. I depended on the occasion and the Holy Ghost to suggest the text, and to open up the whole subject to my mind; and, certainly, in no part of my ministry have I preached with greater success and power. If I did not preach from inspiration, I don't know how I did preach. It was a common experience with me, and has been during all my ministerial life, that the subject would open up to my mind in a manner that was surprising to myself. It seemed that I could see with intuitive clearness just what I ought to say; and whole platoons of thoughts, words, and illustrations came to me as fast as I could deliver them. . . . I believe that all ministers, called by Christ to preach the gospel, ought to be, and may be, in such a sense so inspired as to 'preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.' All ministers may be, and ought to be, so filled with the Holy Spirit that all who hear them shall be im-

pressed with the conviction that God is with them of a truth." (Memoirs, pp. 85-97.)

"Men and women vary indefinitely in their natural powers of persuasion; but no human eloquence can ever convert a soul. Unless the Spirit of God sets home and makes the truth of God effectual, all human eloquence and learning will be in vain. And it is a fact worthy of all attention and consideration that, with very little human culture, this enduement of power will make a Christian wise and efficient in bringing souls to Christ. . . . It is very humiliating to human learning and pride, and always has been; nevertheless, it has been Christ's method from the beginning to choose the weak things of this world to confound the wise. . . . This enduement of power is not a thing into which people can grow by forming habits of persuasion and conversation. It is a gift, an anointing, instantaneously received, and that may be enlarged or diminished as the possessor of it uses it, more or less faithfully and intensely, for the purposes for which it was given. It is oftentimes possessed and then lost, or its manifestation suspended by something that quenches the light of the Spirit in the soul.

"Where this power exists, the more learning and eloquence the better. But it is painful to observe the constant tendency to substitute culture for this power, or human learning and eloquence in place of this Divine enduement. I fear this tendency is increasing in the Church. The Churches are calling for men of great learning and eloquence in place of this Divine enduement, instead of men deeply baptized with the Holy Ghost.

"The seminaries of learning are much at fault in this thing. They do not lay half stress enough upon

this enduement as an essential qualification for usefulness in the world. The manifestation of this enduement of power should be considered an indispensable qualification for a professor in college or in a theological seminary, and the want of it should be considered a disqualification for a professorship, especially in a theological seminary. A theological professor who does not believe in this enduement of power, and who does not possess it in a manifest degree, can not fail to be a stumbling-block to his students. If he does not urge it upon them as the most important of all qualifications for the ministry, if he does not speak of it and treat it as altogether indispensable to success in the ministry, his teaching and his influence will be vitally defective; they will be a snare and a stumbling-block. This *must* be true, or this whole question of the enduement of power from on high must be a delusion." (Baptism of the Holy Ghost, pp. 245-247.)

I have quoted these extended remarks of Finney on preachers and preaching and ministerial instruction, because I believe they contain more sound judgment and wise counsel than can be found in any other equal amount of homiletical literature. I, too, have been through the disgusting farce of preaching a PLAY SERMON to a professor and classmates for criticism. I, too, have been kept from preaching for years while in the college and seminary. I, too, was trained and graduated, and sent out to preach, without having it ever even hinted to me by a professor that I needed the Divine anointing, the enduement of power from on high.

When we reflect that some three thousand Congregational and Presbyterian Churches annually do not report a conversion, with the most highly-educated

clergy in the world, and that there are whole denominations that do still worse, it is quite manifest that something more is needed than the instruction of the schools to make preachers. Finney's success was so signal that theological professors, students, and preachers might well sit at his feet and take lessons in homiletics.

CHAPTER XVI.

FINNEY ON FREEMASONRY.

FINNEY was a reformer, not because he enjoyed battles or loved revolution. He was essentially a man of peace. But he had a heaven-implanted passion for souls. He had a deep and abiding loyalty to the kingdom of God. He struck at anything and everything that crossed his path or stood in the way of establishing that kingdom in the hearts of men. When he was past seventy-five years old he struck at Freemasonry as a hindrance to the spread of the cause of Christ. I shall take the liberty to quote from the Preface, the Table of Contents, and the Introduction, and the conclusion of his book, which will show its drift and purpose and the prayerful decision which he reached.

PREFACE.

"In a few words I wish to state what are not, and what are, my reasons for writing this book.

"1. It is *not* that I have any quarrel or controversy with any member of the Masonic Order. No one of them can justly accuse me of ill-will.

"2. It is not because I am fond of controversy. I am not. I have always dreaded and endeavored to avoid the *spirit*, and even the *form*, of controversy.

"3. It is not because I disregard the sensibility of

Freemasons upon the question of their pet institution, and am willing to arouse their enmity by exposing it.

"4. It is not because I am willing, if I can dutifully avoid it, to render any member of the Fraternity odious.

"But my reasons are:

"1. I wish, if *possible*, to arrest the spread of this great evil by giving the public at least so much information upon this subject as to induce them to examine and understand the true character and tendency of the institution.

"2. I wish, if possible, to arouse the *young men* who are Freemasons to consider the inevitable consequences of such a horrible trifling with the most solemn oaths as is constantly practiced by Freemasons. Such a course must, and does, as a matter of fact, grieve the Holy Spirit, sear the conscience, and harden the heart.

"3. I wish to induce the young men who are not Freemasons *'to look before they leap,'* and not be deceived and committed, as thousands have been, before they were at all aware of the true nature of the institution of Freemasonry.

"4. I, with many, have been remiss in suffering a new generation to grow up in ignorance of the character of Freemasonry as it was fully revealed to us who are now old. We have greatly erred in not preserving and handing down to the rising generation the literature upon this subject, with which we were made familiar forty years ago. For *one*, I must not continue this remissness.

"5. Because I know that nothing is wanting but correct information to banish this institution from wholesome society. This has been abundantly proven. As soon as Freemasons saw that their secrets were made public, they abandoned their Lodges for very shame.

With such oaths upon their souls, they could not face the frowns of an indignant public, already aware of their true position.

"6. Freemasons exhort each other to maintain a dignified silence, and are exhorted not to enter into controversy with opposers of Freemasonry. The reasons are obvious to those who are informed. We know why they are silent, if they are so, and why they will not enter the field of controversy and attempt to justify their institution. I greatly desire to have the public, and especially the Church of Christ, understand what Freemasonry is. Then let them act as duty requires."

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CHAPTER II.—INTRODUCTORY.

"It is high time that the Church of Christ was awake to the character and tendency of Freemasonry. Forty years ago we supposed that it was dead, and had no idea that it could ever revive. But, strange to tell, while we were busy in getting rid of slavery, Freemasonry has revived, and extended its bounds most alarmingly. I propose to write a series of articles giving my views of the character and tendency of the institution. I know something about it, for I have been a Freemason myself. Soon after I was twenty-one years of age, and while in Connecticut at school, an old uncle of mine persuaded me to join the Freemasons, representing that, as I was away from home and much among strangers, it would be of service to me, because, if a Freemason, I should find friends everywhere.

"The Lodge in that place was but a Master's Lodge. I therefore took three degrees, or as far as what they call 'the Sublime Degree of Master Mason.' When I returned to the State of New York, to enter upon the study of law, I found at Adams, where I resided, a Masonic Lodge, and united with them. I soon became

secretary of the Lodge, and met regularly with it. When I took especially the Master's Degree, I was struck with one part of the obligation, or oath, as not being sound either in a political or moral point of view.

"However, I had been brought up with very few religious privileges, and had but slight knowledge on moral subjects; and I was not, therefore, greatly shocked, at the time, with the morality of anything through which I passed. The Lodge where I took my degrees was composed mostly of professed Christians. But when I came to join the Lodge at Adams, I found that the Master of the Lodge was a Deist. At this distance of time I can not be certain whether he was Master when I joined; but I am certain that Deism was no objection to any man becoming a member or a Master of this Lodge. There were in that Lodge some as thoroughly irreligious as I have ever associated with anywhere, and men with whom I never would have associated had they not been Freemasons. There were some very profane men who belonged to it, and some very intemperate men.

"As I paid the strictest attention to what they called their lectures and teachings, I became what they call 'a *bright* Mason;' that is, as far as I went, I committed to memory their *oral* teachings, for they had no other. The oaths were familiar to me, as was everything else that belonged to those three degrees that I had taken.

"I had belonged to the Lodge in Adams nearly four years when I was converted to Christ. During the struggle of conviction of sin through which I passed I do not recollect that the question of Freemasonry ever occurred to my mind. The season that I call properly my conviction of sin was short. My exercises were pungent, and I very soon obtained hope in Christ.

"Soon after my conversion, the evening came for attendance upon the Lodge. I went. They, of course, were aware that I had become a Christian, and the Master called upon me to open the Lodge with prayer. I did so, and poured out my heart to the Lord for blessings upon the Lodge. I observed that it created considerable excitement. The evening passed away, and at the close of the Lodge I was requested to pray again. I did so, and retired, but much depressed in spirit. I soon found that I was completely converted *from* Freemasonry *to* Christ, and that I could have no fellowship with any of the proceedings of the Lodge. Its oaths appeared to me to be monstrously profane and barbarous.

"At that time I did not know how much I had been imposed upon by many of the pretensions of Masonry. But, upon reflection and examination, and after a severe struggle and earnest prayer, I found that I could not consistently remain with them. My new life instinctively and irresistibly recoiled from any fellowship with what I then regarded as 'the unfruitful works of darkness.'

"Without consulting any person, I finally went to the Lodge and requested my discharge. My mind was made up. Withdraw from them I must; with their consent, if I might; without their consent, if I must. Of this I said nothing; but somehow it came to be known that I had withdrawn from them. This created some little feeling among them. They therefore planned a Masonic festival, and sent a committee to me, requesting me to deliver an oration on the occasion. I quietly declined to do so, informing the committee that I could not conscientiously, in any wise, do what would manifest my approval of the institution or sym-

pathy with it. However, at that time, and for years afterward, I remained silent, and said nothing against the institution; for I had not then so well considered the matter as to regard my Masonic oaths as utterly null and void. But from that time I never allowed myself to be recognized as a Freemason anywhere. This was a few years before the revelations of Freemasonry, by William Morgan, was published. When that book was published, I was asked if it was a true revelation of Freemasonry. I replied that it was, so far as I know anything about it; and that, as nearly as I could recollect, it was a verbatim revelation of the first three degrees as I had myself taken them. I replied in this way, because I saw, of course, that as the thing was published, and no longer a secret, I could not be under any obligation to keep it a secret, unless I could be under an obligation to lie, and to lie *perpetually* by denying that that which had been published was truly Freemasonry.

"I knew that I could be under no obligation to be guilty of a perpetual falsehood, and that I really made no revelation of any secret when I frankly acknowledged that that which had been published was a true account of the institution, and a true *exposé* of their oaths, principles, and proceedings. After I considered it more thoroughly, I was more perfectly convinced that I had no right to adhere to the institution, or appear to do so, and that I was bound, whenever the occasion arose, to speak my mind freely in regard to it, and to renounce the horrid oaths I had taken.

"On reflection and examination, I found that I had been grossly deceived and imposed upon. I had been led to suppose that there were some very important

secrets to be communicated to me. But in this respect I found myself entirely disappointed. Indeed, I came to the deliberate conclusion, and could not avoid doing so, that my oaths were procured by fraud and misrepresentations, and that the institution was in no respect what I had previously been informed it was; and as I have had the means of examining it more thoroughly, it has become more and more irresistibly plain to my convictions that the institution is highly dangerous to the State and in every way injurious to the Church of Christ."

In the concluding chapter of the book he makes the following point:

"V. Judging from these revelations, how can we fail to pronounce Freemasonry an antichristian institution? For example: 1. We have seen that its morality is unchristian; 2. Its oath-bound secrecy is unchristian; 3. The administration and taking of its oaths are unchristian, and a violation of the positive command of Christ; 4. Masonic oaths pledge its members to commit most unlawful and unchristian deeds:

"a. To conceal each other's crimes.

"b. To deliver each other from difficulty, whether right or wrong.

c. To unduly favor Masonry in political actions and in business transactions.

"d. Its members are sworn to retaliate and persecute unto death the violators of Masonic obligations.

"e. Freemasonry knows no mercy, but swears its candidates to avenge violations of Masonic obligations unto death.

"f. Its oaths are profane, the taking of the name of God in vain.

"g. The penalties of these oaths are barbarous, and even savage.

"h. Its teachings are false and profane.

"i. Its design is partial and selfish.

"j. Its ceremonies are a mixture of puerility and profanity.

"k. Its religion is Deistic.

"l. It is a false religion, and professes to save men on other conditions than those revealed in the gospel of Christ.

"m. It is an enormous falsehood.

"n. It is a swindle, and obtains money from its membership under false pretenses.

"o. It refuses all examination, and veils itself under a mantle of oathbound secrecy.

"p. It is a virtual conspiracy against both Church and State. No one, therefore, has ever undertaken, and for the plainest reasons none will undertake, to defend Freemasonry as it is revealed in these books. Their arguments are threats, calumny, persecution, assassination. Freemasons do not pretend that Freemasonry, as revealed in these books, is compatible with Christianity. I have not yet known the first Freemason who would affirm that an intelligent adherence to Freemasonry, as revealed in these books, is consistent with a profession of the Christian religion. But we know, if we can know anything from testimony, that these books do truly reveal Freemasonry. We have, then, the implied testimony of Freemasons themselves that the Christian Church ought to have no fellowship with Freemasonry as thus revealed, and that those who adhere intelligently and determinately to such an institution, have no right to be in the Chris-

tian Church. In our judgment, we are forced to the same conclusion; we can not escape from it, though we wish it were otherwise. We, therefore, sorrowfully but solemnly pronounce this judgment.

"And should the question be asked, 'What shall be done with the great number of professed Christians who are Freemasons?' I answer, Let them have no more to do with it; let Christian men labor with them. Let it be distinctly pressed upon their consciences that all Masons above the first two degrees have solemnly sworn to conceal each other's crimes, murder and treason alone excepted, and all above the sixth degree have sworn to conceal each other's crimes without an exception. All above the sixth degree have sworn to espouse each other's cause and to deliver them from any difficulty, whether they are right or wrong. If they have taken those degrees where they swear to persecute unto death those who violate their obligations, let them be asked whether they intend to do any such thing. Let them be distinctly asked whether they intend still to aid and abet the administration and taking of these oaths; if they still intend to countenance the false and hypocritical teachings of Masonry; if they mean to countenance the profanity of their ceremonies, and practice the partiality they have sworn to practice. If so, surely they should not be allowed their places in the Church.

"Can a man who has taken and still adheres to the Master's oath, to conceal any secret crime of a brother of that degree, murder and treason excepted, be a safe man with whom to intrust an office? Can he be trusted as a witness, a juror, or with any office connected with the administration of justice?

"Can a man who has taken, and still adheres to the oath of the Royal Arch Degree, be trusted in office? He swears to espouse the cause of a companion of this degree when involved in any difficulty, so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be right or wrong. He swears to conceal his crimes, MURDER AND TREASON NOT EXCEPTED. He swears to give a companion of this degree timely notice of any approaching danger that may be known to him. Now, is a man bound fast by such an oath to be intrusted with office? Ought he to be accepted as a witness, a juror, when a Freemason is a party, in any case—a sheriff, constable, marshal; ought he to be trusted with the office of judge or justice of the peace? Gentlemen, you know he ought not, and you would despise me should I not be faithful in warning the public against intrusting such men with office.

"But take the large class of men who have sworn, under the most awful penalties, to take vengeance on all who violate Masonic obligations; to seek their condign punishment; to kill them; to persecute them; and to ruin them by representing them wherever they go as worthless vagabonds,—is a man who is under a most solemn oath to kill or seek the death of any man who shall violate any part of the Masonic oaths a fit person to be at large among men? Ought Freemasons of this stamp to be fellowshiped by a Christian Church? Ought not such an one to be regarded as an unscrupulous and dangerous man? I appeal to your conscience in the sight of God, and I know that your moral sense must respond Amen to the conclusions at which I have arrived."

It seems to me that an institution about which this

great and wise man could truthfully say such things should be most thoroughly let alone by all holiness people, and by all who ever hope to be holy.

After he wrote the book, he received letters containing threats of killing him. He only playfully remarked, "I guess I am worth more to kill than for anything else." But God's angels kept him in peace.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ESTIMATE OF FINNEY MADE BY OTHERS—FINNEY AS A THEOLOGIAN.

I HAVE already given the opinion of Dr. Edward Beecher and Dr. Park, of Andover, of Finney's greatness as a preacher. Rev. Charles P. Bush, D. D., of New York City, describing his use of the law and the gospel in his preaching, said: "The Church being thus shaken as by an earthquake, and Christians aroused to pray fervently for God's blessing, Mr. Finney was prepared to preach to sinners. He began with the law, showing what its requirements are; what its penalty, and how just it is; how absolutely necessary to the order and stability of the universe; how even the law itself, as really as the gospel, demonstrates the goodness of the Divine Being; and, therefore, how fearful a thing it must be to sin against such a Lawgiver and against all the interests of the universe.

"There was something fearful in those sermons also. Indeed, it almost makes one shudder, even after this lapse of years, to recall some of them, that especially from the text, 'The wages of sin is death.' The preacher's imagination was as vivid as his logic was inexorable. After laying down self-evident principles of human na-

ture and Divine government, then drawing out Scripture truth touching the same, making all plain and irresistible by argument and illustration, how he rang the changes on that word 'wages,' as he described the condition of the lost soul! 'You will get your *wages;* just what you have earned, your due; nothing more, nothing less; and as the smoke of your torment, like a thick cloud, ascends for ever and ever, you will see written upon its curling folds, in great staring letters of light, this awful word, 'wages, *wages*, WAGES!'

"As the preacher uttered this sentence, he stood at his full height, tall and majestic—stood as if transfixed, gazing and pointing toward the emblazoned cloud as it seemed to roll up before him; his clear, shrill voice rising to its highest pitch, and penetrating every nook and corner of the vast assembly. People held their breath. Every heart stood still. It was almost enough to raise the dead.

"And yet that same mighty man, when speaking of the love of Christ or the peril of the soul in its sins, was as great in tenderness and pity as before in majesty and truth—moved himself to tears and entreaties enough to break a heart of stone. Many seem to think of him only as the stern, uncompromising preacher of righteousness. He was that, and more also—a Paul in doctrine, but touching and tender as John himself in his delineations of Divine love. But he did not preach love as a mere instinct, or a weak, mawkish, and indiscriminating sentiment. His God was not *all* pity, but also a God of majesty and of law and of justice. His love all the more glorious because intelligent, and because it saves from wrath deserved." (Reminiscences, pp. 12, 13.)

PECULIARITIES.

"Nobody knows better than those who loved and admired this good man most that he had his peculiarities. What great man has not? But he was never accused of levity or insincerity. He was a plain, blunt man, that spoke right on, and always meant just what he said. His soul abhorred deceit and hypocrisy. Perhaps it is not too much to say that he saw the truth in greater clearness and more fully appreciated its value and importance than most men could. He was, in fact, a giant in intellect, in the grandeur of his thoughts and purposes, and in the sublime force of his character, and this was enough to justify some of his peculiarities. It is said that he told one of the elders of the Church at Adams, before he was converted, that Christians generally did not half believe what they professed. 'If ever I become a Christian,' he said, 'I shall go into it with all my might.' And he did." (Page 19.)

Rev. R. L. Stanton, D. D., Gincinnati: "When I heard Finney preach that winter, I stood in fear of him. I have heard many of the great preachers of the day, and I REGARD HIM AS THE GREATEST PREACHER I EVER HEARD. I should say that Mr. Finney was a severe preacher. He held up the law as I never heard it held up before or since. He gave such delineations of sin as would make men literally tremble in their seats. On the other hand, I have never heard such exhibitions of the love of Christ. I recollect hearing him preach on 'The wages of sin is death.' I timed him, and he preached two hours. I never heard such delineations of the terrible wrath of God. I think Mr. Finney introduced a new style of preaching. The first three-fourths of his sermon was in a colloquial style; and in

the latter part he would make such appeals as I never listened to anywhere." (Reminiscences, pp. 26-27.)

Hon. William E. Dodge, of New York City: "HE WAS THE MOST REMARKABLE PREACHER THAT I EVER LISTENED TO. He would hold his audiences an hour and a half or two hours, and no one seemed to think the time hung heavy."

Professor John Morgan, D. D.: "I think those who were most intimately acquainted with Mr. Finney have come to the conclusion that he was a man who combined, in a remarkable degree, the intuitive and the logical powers. He had a wonderful intuitive power, and when he had arrived at his bold premises by intuition, whether taken from reason and the works of God, or from the Word of God, he would reason from them with wonderful power. I came, therefore, to the conclusion that, although Mr. Finney was not a learned man, he had been such a student, such a thinker, had so profoundly reflected, that he was really one of the deepest theologians that I had any knowledge of; and I HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO COMPARE HIM WITH PRESIDENT EDWARDS, AS AT LEAST HIS EQUAL; and President Edwards is confessedly one of the first theologians that our country has ever produced. In fifty years, if it be not now, I think that Mr. Finney's equality with him will be admitted.

"But I think that all of us felt that HIS SPIRITUAL POWER WAS THAT IN WHICH HE MOST EXCELLED. The influence which he exerted on souls was sometimes very strong. I remember times when he thought religion was declining in Oberlin; for his standard was so high that he wanted to have things at a very high pitch in order to satisfy him at all. I remember how he used to come and talk the matter over with us, and I USED

TO QUAKE AS HIS MIGHTY EYE WOULD FIX ITSELF UPON ME. I believe that he had much the same kind of influence over whole congregations; but I felt it especially when he addressed me personally. . . . There was in him, in prayer, the most remarkable power that I have ever seen in any human being." (Reminiscences, pp. 57, 58.)

Professor Barbour, of Yale. I remember hearing Rev. Dr. Barbour in a long, critical lecture, declare that President Finney was the first great thinker who had ever adequately and fully maintained, in all its bearings, the doctrine of THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL. He named him among the very foremost of the metaphysical thinkers of the world.

Professor George F. Wright, speaking of Finney as a theologian, makes a striking comparison between him and Augustine, and describes his system of thought as follows:

"It is expected of me to speak of President Finney in the rôle of an Augustine elaborating a theological system, and through it reaching onward with a direct grasp to the generations of the future. With, of course, many qualities that are in contrast, these characters [Augustine and Finney] certainly have numerous striking points of resemblance. Their early neglect of religion, the pronounced nature of their conversion, and the overwhelming flood of emotion that accompanied it, the philosophical cast of their minds, and, what is more in point, the mental furniture with which they began and carried on their expositions of the Christian system of thought, give a striking likeness to these remarkable men. Augustine knew no Hebrew, and very little Greek. Yet, in the opinion of those best qualified

to judge, no single uninspired name has ever exercised such power over the Christian Church, and no one mind ever made such an impression on human thought."

President Finney frankly acknowledged that, while he had studied Hebrew and Greek to some extent, he nevertheless did not consider himself competent to venture on any independent criticism of the Scriptures in their original languages. Our English version was to him what the Vulgate was to Augustine.

President Finney's system of theology may be described as a growth rather than a creation. He did not set himself to work in early life to write a symmetric treatise of Divinity. It has not the pointless mediocrity of such a production. But his system is the outgrowth of a profound religious and extensive practical experience, coupled with an unusual aptitude for philosophical speculation and logical discrimination. He has not interpreted Scripture after the delusive and belittling method of the mere linguist, who is so buried in the details of the grammar and the lexicon that he can never see the broad current of general doctrine that underlies and comprehends it all.

In his view, the Bible is a religious revelation to the common people, which does not, to any great degree, lose its perspicuity in a translation. Its main revelation is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. It is a practical revelation of a highway of holiness, which is not a substitute for common sense, but a supplement to it. Regarding points in dispute the characteristics of Finney's system are briefly these:

1. The human will is self-determining in its action.
2. Obligation is limited by ability.

3. All virtuous choice terminates on the good of beings, and in the ultimate analysis, on the good of being in general.

4. The will is never divided in its action, but with whatever momentum it has at each instant, it is either wholly virtuous or wholly sinful.

5. With regard to total depravity, he accepts it as a Biblical doctrine, that all the acts of men since the fall, and previous to regeneration, are sinful.

6. Regeneration and conversion are treated as synonymous terms, descriptive of a coetaneous act, both of the Holy Spirit and of the human will. He is content to accept the facts, and let alone the mystery; insisting, however, that the human reason is always so far respected that the truth is, in all cases, the instrument through which conversion is secured by the Holy Spirit.

7. The condition into which men are brought by regeneration is either that of continued holiness, increasing in volume, or of states alternating from entire holiness to entire sinfulness; the former state finally predominating, and ending, according to the ordinary Calvinistic doctrine of perseverance, in everlasting salvation. The final perseverance of the saints is accepted as a revealed truth, which the reason can not contradict, and whose mysteries are left with the Lord.

8. Likewise the doctrine of election is maintained as being, in the wisdom of God, our only assurance that the salvation of any will be secured. There is a plan of salvation whose means and ends were chosen from eternity, and which is now unfolding before us.

9. In this plan of salvation Christ is the central figure; a Being who is both God and man, and whose humiliation and sufferings are a governmental substi-

tute for the punishment of those who are sanctified through faith in His name. The atonement satisfies the demands of general justice, and its provisions are freely offered to all men. (Reminiscences, pp. 68-71.)

Professor Wright, in this careful statement of Finney's theology, scarcely mentions sanctification. But Finney gave more space relatively to the discussion of sanctification than any other theologian, more than one-eighth of his entire theology. He held that it was the privilege of God's people to be sanctified; that they were under obligation to be holy, and God expected it of them in this life. The discussion of this, however, and in what respect Finney failed to teach sanctification, we will reserve for the next and concluding chapter.

We will make one more quotation from Professor Wright: "It is an old saying that Calvinists preach Arminianism, and that Arminians pray Calvinism, and so, in one way or the other, the whole truth of both is preserved by congregations of either stamp. [This is not true.]

"President Finney has, we believe, succeeded better than any other author with whose writings we are acquainted, in elaborating a system of theology which combines and harmonizes the truth of these contending parties. He has done this in part in a negative way, by not philosophizing overmuch. The charge of doing that pertains rather to the so-called Old School theologians, who burden the system with their inflexible theories of 'an imputed guilt which is not guilt;' with an idea of obligation which is dissevered from ability. It is they who enter into the philosophy of regeneration, and attempt to prove a universal negative regarding it, asserting that it is an act of the Spirit which is

not moral and persuasive. They undertake to prove that, in regeneration, the Spirit produces a change 'in those immanent dispositions, principles, tastes, or habits, which underlie all conscious exercises.'

"President Finney's example is invaluable in this, that HE LEAVES NO EXCUSES FOR SIN; THAT HE PRESSES HOME UPON ALL PRESENT RESPONSIBILITY; THAT HE EXALTS THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST, AND MAGNIFIES THE HOLY SPIRIT."

President Fairchild, I believe, was a graduate in the first graduating class of Oberlin. He was one of the earliest of the Oberlin students, and spent his life in the college either as student, tutor, professor, or the successor of Finney in the presidency of the college. He knew the great man as well as one soul can know another when the two are very unlike each other. He thus explains Finney's independent attitude in theology:

"Mr. Finney was taken from the world, and not from the Church. He was brought up with very slight associations with religious institutions or churchly influences. With a nature strongly impressible to religious truth, and drawn to its contemplation as by a fascination, he had still stood apart from the Church in the attitude of a critic upon her doctrines and her life. He had no such association with religious people as led him to look to them for counsel, or to seek their guidance in the determination of his work. His natural independence of character led, doubtless, in the same direction. The training he had received in his pursuit of the law co-operated to the same result. He was not hampered by any associations from instruction in catechism or any forms of sound words with which the Church indoctrinates her children, and which in general are doubtless wholesome in their action.

"He came to the study of the Bible and the doctrines of the gospel with the same freedom of judgment and of rational instinct with which he had apprehended and embraced the principles of law, and looked for a similar self-evident truthfulness. Thus he turned away at once from the Old School dogmas of *sin in the nature, of obligation beyond ability, of the literal transfer of the sinner's guilt and punishment to Christ, and of regeneration by a change of nature.* These, so far as he knew, were at the time the prevalent doctrines of the Church. He found them, as he believed, in the Westminister Confession; and in discarding them, he naturally felt that he was departing from the traditions of the Church, and taking a position in a measure antagonistic to that held by the ministry in general. The outspoken boldness of his preaching in these directions led, on the other hand, to apprehensions and suspicions, on the part of many, as to his soundness in the faith; and thus all the influences conspired to confirm him in this somewhat independent line of labor. The strong conviction, beginning with his conversion, and abiding with him to the end, that he must look to *Divine* rather than to *human* guidance, naturally disposed him to mark out a path for himself; and thus, probably unconsciously at first, he entered upon the career of a reformer in the Church. The mission to which he felt himself appointed was that of saving men; and HE REJECTED THE OLD FORMS OF DOCTRINE BECAUSE THEY WERE A HINDRANCE AND NOT A HELP IN HIS WORK. HE NEEDED DOCTRINES WHICH HE COULD PREACH, AND WHICH WOULD MOVE THE CONSCIENCES OF MEN. In submitting himself to God, he had consciously yielded to the truth, and he came to depend upon the truth as the power of God unto salvation. Thus he was led to readjust

and restate for his own uses as a preacher of salvation the great doctrines of grace. He was naturally a keen analyst in the range of philosophic thought, and few men have had an intenser relish for such studies on the ground of their own intrinsic merit; but it was not as a philosopher that he pushed his inquiries, but as a servant of Christ to whom a dispensation of the gospel had been committed. ON HIS KNEES, BEFORE HIS OPEN BIBLE, SUSTAINED BY THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY OF ONE GOOD ELDER, HE WROUGHT OUT HIS THEOLOGICAL SYSTEM—not that he might become a reformer in theology, but that he might qualify himself as 'a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.'

"Other men in the Churches were at the same time working for similar modifications of the old Calvinism—men like Taylor and Beecher in New England, and Beman and Aiken and others in New York. But with these men Finney had no communication. He had no opportunity to confer with 'flesh and blood,' but received his gospel as the Word of God communicated to his mind by the illumination of the Spirit. Thus he went forth to his work as a preacher, with the full conviction that he had a message from God to man; and this conviction was strong upon him during the fifty years of his public life and labor." (Reminiscences, pp. 78-80.)

In closing this chapter, it is proper to attempt to locate Finney as a theologian. Many speak of him as if he were a Calvinist. Indeed, the phrase "New School Calvinist" is a vague, indefinite term, under whose ample folds a multitude of theologians, who are unwilling to break away wholly from their ecclesiastical relations, are hiding from the horrors of Calvinism.

Finney was no Calvinist. We might arrive at this decision from several arguments:

1. He utterly rejected the Wesminster Confession, declared he was ashamed of it, and of the Scripture arguments made in its support. All his life long he held it up to scorn by his withering sarcasm, and hewed it to pieces by his merciless logic. But the Westminster Confession is the embodiment and quintessence of Calvinism; whoever rejects the former is no disciple of the latter.

2. To his dying day true-blue Calvinists feared and fought Finney. Dr. Charles Hodge turned all his batteries against him relentlessly; and Hodge was the incarnation of Calvinism, and gloried in all its horrors and blasphemies.

3. The Five Points of Calvinism are: (1) Unconditional election; (2) Complete redemption for the elect only, or limited atonement; (3) Fallen man is incapable of faith and repentance, or total moral inability; (4) God's grace is irresistibly efficacious for the salvation of the elect, and no others can be saved; (5) A soul once converted or regenerated is never lost, or final perseverance of the saints.

Now, the first four of these, and all the awful corollaries and inferences drawn from them, Finney utterly repudiated a thousand times over in every kind of expression and argument. He once said, in a sermon, of the doctrine of *moral inability:* "It is echoed and reechoed over every Christian land, and handed down age after age, never to be forgotten. With unblushing face it is proclaimed that men *can not* do what God requires of them. It is only moderate language to call this assertion from the Confession of Faith A LIBEL. IF THERE IS A LIE EITHER IN HELL OR OUT OF HELL,

THIS IS A LIE, OR GOD IS AN INFINITE TYRANT. If reason be allowed to speak at all, it is impossible for her to say less or otherwise."

In another place he names one of the well-known doctrines of Calvinism and declares, "NO SLANDER COULD BE MORE GROUNDLESS OR MORE FOUL." At another time he cried out against one of the shameful statements that make God responsible for the awful wickedness of this world, "IT IS AS VILE A SLANDER AGAINST GOD AS WAS EVER VOMITED OUT OF HELL!"

At another time, a man who had been made an infidel by Calvinism quoted to Finney, "Is it not true that 'no mere man since the fall has been able wholly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed?'" Finney answered: "Ah, my friend, that is Catechism, not Bible. We must be careful not to impute to the Bible all that human catechisms have said. The Bible only requires you to consecrate to God what strength and powers you actually have, and is by no means responsible for the affirmation that God requires of man more than he can do. No, verily, the Bible nowhere imputes to God a requisition so unreasonable and cruel. No wonder the human mind should rebel against such a view of God's law. If any human law were to require impossibilities, there could be no end to the denunciations that must fall upon it. No human mind could possibly approve of such a law; nor can it be supposed that God can reasonably act on principles which would disgrace and ruin any human government." Now I submit that it is an abuse of language to call a man a Calvinist who thus indignantly rejected all the doctrines that were the very heart and core and marrow of Calvinism.

4. I call attention to the fact that nowhere, either

in England or America, did Finney preach with more hearty co-operation with his brethren, nor more in harmony with them, than in *Bolton, England*, where John Wesley had done his most successful work, and where Wesleyanism was in the ascendency.

Joseph Cook once said in Boston that the Methodists had a theology that they could preach without making an apology for it. That is exactly what Finney learned on his knees—a theology that honored God and justified his ways to men. He learned it not from books, but from *the Book* and from the Holy Spirit's illumination. He was as original a thinker as Arminius, and we do not hesitate to say that whatever there was of practical value in his theology, and a help to his soul-winning, was essentially Arminian. So far from being a Calvinist, he was just such an one as John Calvin himself would have burned at the stake, with far more relish than he burned Servetus.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FINNEY ON SANCTIFICATION AND ITS RESULTS IN OBERLIN—COLLEGE HISTORY—CLOSING PICTURES.

We have seen in the foregoing chapter how President Finney came to be such an independent theologian by a perfectly natural process. The only theological books to which he had access were intensely Calvinistic, and he rejected their teaching. He had received a baptism with the Holy Ghost almost immediately after conversion, and that brought his heart in loving harmony with God and holiness. He had no knowledge of the subject whatever, and no theory either to oppose or defend. He only knew that he panted after God and holiness as the hart pants after the water-brooks. When he read in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, "No man is able, either by himself or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed," his Spirit-illumined soul resented it. He began to meditate deeply on the subject of holiness. The only theologies he had he rejected; the only preachers he knew he distrusted as unsafe guides. He worked out his scheme of sanctification without man-made helps or helpers. If he had had some judicious books on the subject of sanctification, I am persuaded that all

would have been different. But there were few such books in the early part of his ministry, and those he had never seen. Even John Wesley's "Christian Perfection" never came into his hands until 1836, when he had already filled the world with his fame, and his theology had practically taken its permanent form.

Perhaps the wonder is that he thought so wisely and so well; for no one mind, however great, can think out everything correctly alone, in so vast a field of thought as theology.

In 1837 he delivered two lectures to Christians in New York City on "Christian Perfection." There is very much of truth and value in them. The divisions of the first lecture were:

I. I will show what Christian Perfection is not.

II. I will show what Christian Perfection is. It is perfect obedience to the law of God. The law of God requires perfect, disinterested, impartial benevolence, love to God, and love to our neighbor.

III. I am to show that Christian Perfection is a duty.

1. Because God requires it.

2. Because God has no right to require anything less.

3. Should any one contend that the gospel requires less holiness than the law, I would ask him to say *just how much less* it requires.

IV. I will show that Christian Perfection is attainable in this life.

1. This may be inferred from the fact that it is commanded.

2. That there is a natural ability to be perfect is a simple matter of fact.

There is no *moral inability* to be perfectly holy.

Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as Moral Inability. I have always maintained that Christian perfection is a duty, and I am more convinced than ever, during the last few months, that it is *attainable in this life*. I am persuaded of this because—

1. God wills it.

2. All the *promises* and *prophecies* of God that respect the sanctification of believers in this world are to be understood of their PERFECT SANCTIFICATION.

3. Perfect sanctification is the great blessing promised throughout the Bible. "Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature. HAVING ESCAPED THE CORRUPTION that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. i, 4.) If that is not perfect sanctification, I beg to know what is? (Ez. xxxvi, 25; Jer. xxxiii, 8; Eph. v, 25; 1 Thess. v, 23.)

4. The perfect sanctification of believers is the very object for which the Holy Spirit is promised.

5. If it is not a practicable duty to be perfectly holy in this world, then it will follow that the devil has so completely accomplished his design in corrupting mankind that *Jesus Christ* is at fault, and *has no way to sanctify His people but to take them out of the world.*

6. If perfect sanctification is not attainable in this world, it must be, either from a want of motives in the gospel, or a want of sufficient power in the Spirit of God.

Then he answers a number of objections, and closes, according to his custom, with eight remarks on the reasons why there is no more perfection in the world.

The seventh is: "They seek it by the law, and not by faith. How may are seeking sanctification by their own resolutions and works, their fastings and

prayers, their endeavors and activity, instead of taking right hold of Christ, by faith, for sanctification, as they do for justification! It is all *work*, WORK, WORK, when it should be by faith in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and SANCTIFICATION, and redemption. When they go and take right hold of the strength of God, they will be sanctified. Faith will bring Christ right into the soul, and fill it with the same Spirit that breathes through Himself. It is faith that must sanctify; it is faith that purifies the heart."

Save in the second point, there is scarcely a flaw in that sermon, and the reader may be tempted to ask wherein Finney failed in the teaching of sanctification. Only by a careful analytical study of his teaching will one detect its limitation and the cause of his failure. The basis of his difficulty was that he fixed all his attention upon the WILL as the only faculty of the man that needed any attention in seeking holiness. This appears in his definitions, and terms, and arguments.

1. For example, take his definition of depravity. He admitted PHYSICAL DEPRAVITY that—

(1) "Made the body diseased."

(2) "Made the actings and states of the intellect disordered, depraved, deranged, or fallen from the state of integrity and healthiness."

(3) "Made the sensibility, or feeling department of the mind, sadly depraved. The appetites and passions, the desires and cravings, the antipathies and repellencies of the feelings, fall into great disorder and anarchy. Numerous artificial appetites are generated, and the whole sensibility becomes a wilderness, a chaos of conflicting and clamorous desires, emotions, and passions."

But he made nothing of all this *physical* depravity,

and said that "MORAL depravity consisted in selfishness, in a state of voluntary committal of the will to self-gratification." He therefore gave his whole attention to the rectification of the WILL as the only thing to be concerned about. He strangely forgot that, while the "intellect was deranged" and "the sensibility" was "a wilderness, a chaos of conflicting and clamorous desires, emotions, and passions," the will would have a hard time of it, and be quite likely to be unsteady in its loyalty and devotion to God. He ignored that vast realm of "chaotic desires, emotions, and passions" that lie back of the will, and underlie its activities.

I have already quoted Finney as saying, "I had known somewhat of the view of sanctification entertained by our Methodist brethren; but as their idea of sanctification seemed to me to relate almost altogether to states of the sensibility, I could not receive their teaching." Precisely this was Finney's fundamental error; and in this is the excellence of the Methodist doctrine of sanctification; it looks after the cleansing of the "wilderness of depravity," the sanctifying of the "chaotic desires, emotions, and passions," the slaying of the abnormal propensities and appetites that are hostile to God and holiness.

1. Sometimes Finney seemed to get a glimpse of the true philosophy of sanctification, which should have served as a clew to lead him out into the full truth. For instance, on page 275 of his "Lectures to Christians" he says: "The converted person feels at peace with God, joy and gratitude fills his heart, and he rejoices in having found a Savior. . . . But by and by he finds *the working of sin in his members, unsubdued pride, his old temper breaking forth, and a multitude of enemies assaulting his soul from within*, and he *is not pre-*

pared to meet them." This ought to have convinced Finney of the need of having those inner forces of the nature cleansed by the Holy Spirit; but it did not. He never came into the full light.

2. Here is his definition of holiness or sanctification: "We have seen that holiness belongs strictly only to the will or heart, and consists in obedience of will to the law of God as it lies revealed in the intellect; that it is expressed in one word, Love; that this love is identical with the entire consecration of the whole being to the glory of God." (Systematic Theol., p. 403.)

Again: "Sanctification, as a state differing from a holy act, is a standing ultimate intention, and exactly synonymous or identical with a state of obedience." (Page 405.) Now, a justified man *can obey* God, and *does obey* Him while he retains his justification. The above definition, therefore, falls utterly short of the Scriptural idea of holiness which is taught by Methodism.

3. Again Finney says: "Sanctification consists in the will's devoting or consecrating itself and the whole being to the service of God. . . . Sanctification may be entire in two senses: (1) In the sense of present, full obedience, or entire consecration to God; and (2) In the sense of *continued*, ABIDING consecration or obedience to God. Entire sanctification in this sense consists in being ESTABLISHED, CONFIRMED, CONTINUED in a state of sanctification or of entire consecration to God." (Page 405.)

Here, again, are the two fundamental and fatal mistakes of his system. So far at it relates to sanctification: (!) He makes it consist in a devotion of the will to God—a thing that is always secured by conversion and regeneration—while the Scripture makes it con-

sist in the CLEANSING of the whole being, precisely as the Methodist Church teaches. (Acts xv, 8-9.) (2) He makes "*consecration*" synonymous with "sanctification." But consecration is only one of several conditions of sanctification; not the thing itself. First, *man* consecrates himself to God, and then by faith receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the cleansing of the whole being—the SANCTIFICATION OF BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT. Man consecrates; the Holy Spirit sanctifies. Finney never got this clearly in his thought. The only difference he made between "sanctification" and "ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION" was, that the latter is "a CONTINUED, ABIDING obedience."

President Fairchild accepted President Finney's definitions, and then coolly set it all aside by denying that it was a second distinct work of grace after conversion, that it was "sudden," and by affirming that "this establishment or permanency, when attained, can not reveal itself in consciousness." That is, Fairchild said that it would take a special revelation from heaven to let a person know that his *will* would remain *permanently* loyal to God.

According to this, the angels that fell, even though they may have lived in heaven with God a million years, were never WHOLLY sanctified, because at last their wills finally broke connection with God. This was a logical inference from a false definition; and the natural result would be to dampen all ardor in the pursuit of an experience which one never could know that he had obtained; and if he did pursue it with ardor, how could he testify to the possession of it for all *future* time? Manifestly he could not; for no man knows whether his present moral state will be abiding. This was precisely the effect of this false notion and defi-

nition upon Finney himself. With all his preaching of the privilege and duty of believers to be sanctified, and writing about it, and striving after it, he did not testify to it himself. He said in his "Lectures to Christians on Perfection," page 266: "I do not myself profess now to have attained perfect sanctification; but if I had attained it, if I felt that God had really given me the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, and made me free from sin, would I keep it a secret, locked up in my own breast, and let my brethren stumble on in ignorance of what the grace of God can do? Never!"

Professor Wright, in his "Biography of Finney," wrote: "Still, Finney did not encourage any to announce themselves as living in a permanent state of entire consecration (sanctification); nor was he ever known to speak of himself as having attained that state. He knew too well the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the fallibility of memory, to encourage such claims; and so, as the declaration expresses it, attention was to be turned, not to the question whether any were now actually attaining this state, but whether it was attainable in any such sense that it could rationally be striven after."

"The believer's need, according to Finney, is to have such a revelation of the great truths of the gospel that they shall serve as a counterpoise to the abnormal developments of the lower propensities."

Alas! if Finney had only paid more attention to "these abnormal developments of the lower propensities," and had sought the crucifixion of this "old man," instead of a *counterpoise* to it, by a heart-cleansing baptism with the Holy Spirit, he would have worried less about the *permanency* of his will. He would also have

had the removal of indwelling sin to testify to; for the Holy Spirit would have borne him witness. (Acts xv, 8, 9; Heb. x, 14, 15.)

4. Finney failed to connect the obtaining of sanctification with the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Sometimes he almost got the truth, as his directions to seekers occasionally show. But his discussions, *as a whole*, show that he never fully grasped the idea that the heart was cleansed of indwelling sin by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. So it came about that, with all his matchless gifts as a preacher and teacher, he was not eminently successful as a teacher of sanctification.

No man in his generation studied the subject more carefully. Probably no one even tried so hard to preach it and to lift the Church from its low state of piety. No man suffered such opposition and abuse, both from friends and foes, for doing it. Dr. Hodge led all the Calvinists in a combined assault upon him, paying him back with compound interest for all the hard things he had said against the Confession of Faith and the leading points of Calvinism. Even the "New School" preachers with whom he had held sweet communion and labored in blessed revivals, tore away at his reputation, and lacerated his heart, and opposed his college. Presbyteries passed resolutions; Doctors of Divinity wrote books and pamphlets, persistently misrepresented his teachings, and warned the people against him, and the Churches against his work, all because he strove to be holy, and taught, to the best of his ability, that God required believers to be holy, and that it was clearly possible, by the grace of God, to be holy in this present life.

Had the books of John Wesley and John Fletcher and Adam Clarke and Carvosso been put into his

hands at the time of his conversion, it would, I believe, have been an unspeakable blessing to the kingdom of God. Had Finney held correct Scriptural opinions of what sanctification is, and how it is obtained, he would have been the mightiest preacher of holiness the world has yet had since St. Paul, just as he was the most successful soul-winner of the centuries.

As it was, a few souls here and there sought and received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and obtained the Divine witness to a cleansing of heart under his preaching. Among these was President Mahan himself, and Rev. Sherlock Bristol, of the second graduating class, I think, of Oberlin; and we may hope Professor Cowles and Professor Morgan, both of whom wrote on the subject of holiness.

The attention of the whole school was drawn to the subject of holiness and to an earnest inquiry as to its attainability in this life. There was then a perpetual revival atmosphere in Oberlin, and almost a continuous revival, making that college hamlet a delightsome place, where the Spirit of God had right of way and brooded over homes and hearts. Had Oberlin held the Scriptural, old-fashioned Methodist doctrine of sanctification from the beginning, she might have easily become the capital of the holiness movement of the world, and had three thousand students to-day, instead of less than half as many.

But none of these leaders then apprehended the glorious truth in its fullness; they were feeling their way into the light. None of them ever fully reached it but President Mahan. He was born and brought up a Presbyterian and Calvinist after the straitest sect, and well-nigh lost his soul from the chilling, deadening doctrines of that awful system. But through years of prayerful

meditation he struggled out into the truth, broke away from the horrors of his ancestral faith, became a Congregational preacher and president of Oberlin College for fifteen years; then president of a Methodist college in Michigan; closing his noble life for several years as an editor of a holiness journal in London. He thought the subject through, and became, in the closing years of his life, as clear as a bell on the subject of sanctification.

He was a graduate of Hamilton College and Andover Seminary, an exceptionally able preacher, a bold and vigorous thinker, an enthusiastic student of philosophy and theology, a man of keen moral intuitions, and an aggressive moral reformer. He had an active, fertile mind, giving to the world the following books: "Mahan on the Will," "Intellectual Philosophy," "Moral Philosophy," "Logic," "Spiritualism," "Natural Theology," "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost," "Out of Darkness Into Light," "Autobiography: Intellectual, Moral, and Spiritual." Though not such a genius as Finney, there were not a few who regarded him as the strongest man in the Oberlin Faculty. He was baptized with the Holy Ghost in 1836, one year after he became president of the college, and from that time onward he bent the energies of his manly mind to discover the truth about sanctification. He ultimately found the happy haven of intellectual and soul rest in the Methodist doctrine of a work of grace subsequent to regeneration, obtained by faith, and consisting of a cleansing of heart produced by a baptism with the Holy Ghost.

He was very aggressive in defending and pushing the doctrine of sanctification. It, of course, aroused opposition to the college; this, in turn, led those in influence in the college who were formal in religion and

cold toward the doctrine of sanctification, to oppose him at home. They wanted peace with those who opposed the doctrine of holiness; and this man was betrayed to formal professors and a Christless world, and practically forced to resign from the presidency in 1850. That was the darkest day, I believe, that ever came to Oberlin; from which may be dated the beginning of her fatal spiritual decline.

I have written to Rev. Sherlock Bristol, of Montalvo, California, one of the few men now living who knows all the facts from the beginning of Oberlin's history, who himself was baptized with the Spirit, and became a preacher and author of great power and usefulness, to give me the facts about Mahan's resignation and Oberlin's spiritual decline. Here are selections from his letters:

"MONTALVO, CAL., January 2, 1902.

"MY DEAR BROTHER HILLS,—Your letter of December 28th came to hand this evening, and was very cheering and encouraging. The reports of conversions and sealings of the Spirit in the Holiness University, and in that part of Texas, are such as we do not hear of nowadays in the Northern part of the country. I think I know the reason why this is so. It is the same as made the north of Palestine more receptive of Christ than highly favored and enlightened Judea. They were less gospel-hardened, had less pride and self-conceit. I rejoice that it is so, and can heartily join with Christ in saying, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.' The growth of your college and theological school is wonderful. How I should like to help you! But such as I have I give—a daily visit with our Lord to the school in prayer. . . . Now, in regard to

Oberlin and its steps down from the highway of holiness, where once it walked with God in the days of Finney's and Mahan's presidency, I feel reluctant to write, lest I should seem ungrateful for what that school did for me, and lest, also, some injustice should be done to some one. The Lord help me to write with a charity that thinketh no evil!

"That Oberlin has receded from the high ground she once occupied spiritually admits of no question. President Fairchild definitely owned it in a pamphlet he published some twenty years ago, and read before the Faculty, securing their approval and indorsement. In it he went so far as to say, 'It came to be more and more a matter of doubt whether the seeking of sanctification as a special experience was on the whole to be encouraged, and it was not in general an occasion of satisfaction when a young man gave himself up to seek the blessing.' This shows how far Oberlin had backslid from the high and apostolic ground held while President Mahan stood as the human head of the school.

"This leads me to trace, somewhat in detail, the steps which led to this sad departure. President Mahan was quite as prominent in those days as was Professor Finney. In my opinion, the baptism with the Spirit he received was equal to Finney's. His sermons were mighty and his influence great. Spending his vacations abroad in spiritual labors, he boldly urged upon Christians and converts the earnest seeking of that Divine enduement foretold by the prophet Joel and experienced at Pentecost. Vast good was done. But, as was to be expected, opposition appeared here and there. Letters were written from Boston and elsewhere, criticising Mahan's preaching of the doctrine. Some of these

fell into the hands of members of the Faculty, who did not relish the doctrine, and felt restive under its demands and restraints. Revivals followed all his labors; but, notwithstanding, he found on his return, when the term opened, quite a clique combining against him.

"A continual dropping wears a rock. I knew these men, one and all, and how assiduously they worked. During a winter vacation, while Mahan was absent in Boston, Providence, and New York, these home critics drew up a paper, and, by strong efforts, persuaded a majority of the Faculty to ask him to resign. It almost broke his heart. But he continued his energetic work. I left my work of gathering funds for the school, went back, and persuaded the Faculty to withdraw their request. He returned and resumed his work; but no more with the cordial good-will and co-operation of former times. Finally he resigned. I have no more doubt that it was want of spirituality that generated the opposition and fed it than I have that I write this account of the matter. Nor have I any doubt of that action being a great sin against God. From that day onward, Oberlin declined further and further from the spiritual life and power of Mahan's days, but with like steps, also, from the doctrine of possible Pentecostal power.

"When the dear man left the school for which he had done so much, he must have felt much as Paul did when he uttered the sad words in his letter to Timothy, 'Thou knowest that all they of Asia are turned away from me, of whom is Phygellus and Hermogenes!' Oberlin is still a large school of intellectual and moral power; but the spiritual power of other days it has no more.

'O hadst thou known in that thy day,
And flocked beneath the wing
Of Him who called thee lovingly,
Thine own anointed King.
Then had the tribes of all the earth
Gone up thy pomp to see,
And glory dwelt in all thy gates,
And all thy sons been free!'

"I am sure President Finney never agreed with President Fairchild in repudiating the Pentecostal baptism so plainly taught as the need and privilege of New Testament Christians. He had felt too deeply its influence within, and witnessed too much of its power without. But he was getting worn down and wearied, and he allowed things to drift as he would not have done in earlier days; and he died before having seen President Fairchild's pamphlet repudiating the experience and doctrine of Mahan's administration and times.

"How sad the history of Oberlin! I mourn every time I look that way. Fairchild and I have exchanged many letters on the subject. He and I were very warm friends during our whole college and theological course. I do not think he loved any student more than myself, if I except his brother Henry. He was a natural gentleman, genial, moral, of equable temperament, and highly intellectual; non-impulsive, and little tempted toward outbreaking sins. He passed through those great Pentecostal seasons which changed so many of us without any deep sense of his own need of a baptism with the Holy Ghost, and with little effort to obtain it. It was in that line, what abnormal morality is, often an obstacle to conversion. 'I fast twice in a week; I give tithes of all I possess,' etc., seems to me the illusion which kept him from seeking and obtaining the gift unspeakable. 'Because thou sayest I am rich,' etc.,—

that is my explanation of his singular blindness, and also of his fearful leading of other blind ones also. It is God's order that we all, however intellectual, should go to Christ for light; and unless He anoints our eyes with the eye-salve of heaven, we shall grope in darkness all our days.

"Fairchild did not intend to be a preacher, and did not realize his need of more than natural equipments to do his work as a teacher and Christian. He ultimately threw his influence decidedly against the doctrine. He criticised it in his theology, and in his pamphlet defended the drift of Oberlin backward from the ground occupied by Finney and Mahan to that occupied by the average Churches. Oberlin, with few exceptions, went with him. '*Facilis est descensus Averni.*' Nevertheless, the seed sown is springing up all over the land.

"Just now there is a great struggle at Oberlin, as in other colleges, to gain large endowments of money. But what it needs more than all the gold of earth is a return to its first love—to the spirit of those early days when its students were taught to 'tarry in Jerusalem till endued with power from above.' The retrograde steps of Oberlin were due to the persistent carpings and criticisms of men in the Faculty, college, and town, who had small experience in spiritual things. So chronic it became, at length, that better men at last yielded, and consented to Mahan's departure, and with him the doctrine of sanctification, for *the sake of peace!* Oberlin's 'Old Guard,' Morgan, Finney, and Cowles, and many sanctified students, will mourn this concession for many a day. May other institutions take warning, and 'let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!'

"This is a long letter, written in haste and with sorrow. May the Lord bless you, dear brother, and preserve you and your school from the like disaster, and unto Him be the praise for ever and ever!

"Most affectionately, your brother,

"S. BRISTOL."

This is an epitome of the sad history of sanctification in Oberlin College and Churches, which Finney went to Oberlin expressly to teach. He had been in England for a year when Mahan resigned. It is evident that he had no part in bringing it about. On his return to Oberlin, in 1851, he was elected to the presidency of the college, and filled the place until 1865, when he, in turn, was asked to resign; ostensibly, on account of his age; possibly, for the same reason that Mahan's resignation was secured. It is a significant fact that, in his Autobiography, Finney never mentions or alludes to his presidency of the college. Fairchild was his successor in the office,—a cool, almost contemptuous, rejecter of both the doctrine and experience of sanctification. He was a man of large intellectual gifts, but unusually devoid of spiritual power. I have been told by one who spent a lifetime in Oberlin that he was never known to have a conversion under his preaching.

I have given this history of Finney's teaching of sanctification in Oberlin for the striking lessons which it teaches:

1. He never had the correct view. Had Mahan been let alone, the school would ultimately have reached it,—the Methodist doctrine of the founders and best exponents of Methodism. Its sweet reasonableness, and the attainability of the experience, would have been

so attractive, and so many would have obtained it, that it would have possessed the college and Churches, and never could have been driven out. But an unwise theory could easily be discounted and discarded by unspiritual minds. It is profoundly important to get the Scriptural truth regarding any doctrine which the devil peculiarly hates and stirs up earth and hell to oppose. Of all the subjects of theology, that doctrine which he thus hates to-day is SANCTIFICATION.

2. It is well to notice that the outside opposition to Oberlin never did her the slightest harm. So long as she was, up to her best light and knowledge, true to God and holiness, she had amazing progress. But she was betrayed by those within her own fold. Under Mahan's administration the school grew to an enrollment of one thousand pupils. Now, after fifty-two years, that enrollment has only increased about thirty or forty per cent, and, I think, is not as large as it was some years ago. It may in time dimly dawn on the minds of some that, in the management of a great institution of learning, there are some things to be sought after besides scholarship, and money, and mortar, and stone.

How true it is that one generation makes history, and another sits in judgment on it, and decides whether it was wise or otherwise! English statesmen are now saying that England fought on the wrong side in the Crimean war. In another generation they will sit in judgment upon the wisdom of the present war in South Africa. It was no doubt thought to be a master-stroke of policy to get rid of Mahan, and make peace with those who fought sanctification. Now we can look back and see what fearful strides Oberlin has made worldward since that hour. During one of his last

years of teaching, President Fairchild said in a classroom, "A wave of the world has struck Oberlin." Probably he little dreamed that it was by his own hand that the world struck.

Rev. Dr. Brand was Finney's successor as pastor of the First Congregational Church of Oberlin. Professor Henry Churchill King is Fairchild's successor as teacher of Systematic Theology, as he followed Finney. For two years Professor King was potential in the college while the trustees were seeking for a president, and calling President John Barrows. He introduced card-playing as an allowable pastime for the students, which for more than sixty years had been interdicted. He did it, too, against the tearful protest of Dr. Brand, who literally died soon after with a broken heart because of this fresh cyclone of worldliness which had broken over the place, making a revival of religion impossible. An alumnus said to me that, during Professor King's short term of power, he inflicted an evil upon the institution that it will not recover from in a quarter of a century. Will it ever do it? When, at the great alumni gathering in 1900 Professor King stood up before the vast throng, and grew red in the face defending the Oberlin's card-playing and worldliness, amidst the clapping of the students and the sorrow and pain of the old graduates and friends of Oberlin, he only proved two things: 1. That he was stung by criticisms of this modern life in the college; and 2. That the criticisms were deserved.

A man of national reputation, not a son of Oberlin, but well acquainted with it, many years ago told me that he thought there was more pure religion in Oberlin than in any other place of its size on the globe. But, in 1900, two men high up in official and profes-

sional life in Oberlin told me there was no special reason why any one should come to Oberlin for the sake of its peculiar religious opportunities. This may seem a light thing to some; but to us who love Oberlin and the kingdom of Christ it is sad beyond description. The case, then, stands thus: Mahan and Finney tried to teach sanctification and to make it a living experience in the college and Church; Fairchild stabbed it to death; and King joyfully buried it under a mountain-pile of euchre-decks!

3. There is a lesson here for our own Texas Holiness University, and for any other colleges who have had or may ever have the truth on the subject of holiness. Let it be known as a matter of history that this school was planted with the avowed purpose of giving the most careful training to the intellects of our pupils while the Lord sanctified their hearts; and, as a result, the Lord has sent us nearly three hundred students in the last four months from fourteen States, and ninety-five of them have been saved or sanctified; one hundred and seventy-three knelt at our altar and found God in conversion or sanctification during the year 1901; and more than one hundred found Him the year before; and our school is not yet two years and a half old. If this is the way God builds up a school that daily teaches sanctification as a work of grace subsequent to conversion, wrought in the heart by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, it is good enough for me.

Holiness evangelists and Methodist ministers inform me that some Methodist authors and institutions are forsaking their own pure faith, and are playing with Fairchild's theory. I warn them, one and all, it will be fatal to the spirituality of the man or institution that tries it. I challenge one and all to show that

any other than the old Methodist theory of sanctification has ever been permanently and successfully worked with commanding results. If we give this truth half a chance in our hearts and institutions, the Spirit of God will clothe us with power, and we shall be more than conquerors over a frowning world and all the hosts of hell.

But we will return to a few closing words about the great soul, a brief picture of whose noble life we have been giving to the world. Henry Ward Beecher heard him preach twice in London at the time of his first visit to England. He wrote back to the *New York Independent* that there were a thousand inquirers at the close of each service. "Nor," wrote he, "have we ever witnessed more solemnity, order, and unexceptionable propriety in the conduct of meetings than has prevailed under Mr. Finney at the tabernacle. Whoever speaks against this work, speaks not against Mr. Finney, but against all revivals."

At the farewell meeting in London, after nine months of preaching by Finney nearly every night in his church, Dr. Campbell said: "We can not say that we are much gratified at the thought of Mr. Finney's returning to college duties and the general ministry of a rural parish. We do not consider that such is the place for the man; and we must be allowed to think that, fifteen years ago, a mistake was committed when he became located in the midst of academic bowers. He is made for the millions; his place is the pulpit rather than the professor's chair. He is a heaven-born sovereign of the people. The people he loves, and the mass of the people all but idolize him. . . . His rare gifts are of signal service in enabling Mr. Finney to fathom the deepest recesses of the human heart, and

to throw light on the darkest portions of human character. For moral anatomy he has no equal among the multitude of great and successful preachers whom it has been our lot to hear. He is a man singularly endowed for evangelistic labors. We doubt if, in all the forty thousand preachers of America, there are many, if one, that possess all the qualifications above enumerated." (Wright's "Finney," pp. 295-301.)

In this picture of this great soul-winner, we should have made him more lifelike and human if we had dwelt more upon his personal characteristics, and given a few of the quaint incidents of his life. But the purpose of this brief story was too grave to admit of it. It possibly might be thought that this stern preacher of righteousness, with his unbending integrity and awful sense of obligation to God and the sacredness of duty, would be hard and unlovely in the home. Precisely the opposite was true. He was simple and tender, and sweet as a child, in his home life. His affection for his family was unbounded, and they almost idolized him. He was a mighty man of prayer; and prayer is one of the most sacred and precious privileges vouchsafed to mortals. Here are two scenes of this Elijah in prayer:

"The summer of 1853 was unusually hot and dry, so that the pastures were scorched, and there seemed likely to be a total failure of the crops. Under these circumstances, the great congregation gathered one Sabbath in the church at Oberlin as usual, when, though the sky was clear, the burden of Finney's prayer was for rain. In his prayer he deepened the cry of distress which went up from every heart by mentioning in detail the prolonged drouth, in about these words:

"'We do not presume, O Lord, to dictate to Thee what is best for us; yet Thou dost invite us to come to

Thee as children to an earthly father, and tell Thee all our wants. WE WANT RAIN. Our pastures are dry. The earth is gaping open for rain. The cattle are wandering about and lowing in search of water. Even the little squirrels in the woods are suffering from thirst. Unless Thou givest us rain, our cattle will die and our harvests will come to naught. O Lord, send us rain, and send it now! Although, to us, there is no sign of it, it is an easy thing for Thee to do. *Send it now*, Lord, for Christ's sake. Amen."

He took a text, and began to preach; but in a few minutes had to stop for the noise of the rattle and roar of the storm. He paused, and said, "We would better stop and thank God for the rain." He then gave out the hymn:

> "When all thy mercies, O my God,
> My rising soul surveys!"

Another scene I have heard described by a student who was an eye-witness. A theological class was about to graduate and go out into the world as ambassadors for God. They came to the recitation, and, as usual, he opened the class with prayer. As he prayed, the thought of the solemnity of their calling came over him; the unfriendly world they must face, with all its depressing temptations; the importance of their success; the need of the Church; the worth of souls. He prayed on and on, with increasing tenderness and fervor through the hour, until the hour-bell rang for the next recitation, when they tiptoed out of the room, leaving him still in prayer.

And here we will leave him, with the passion of souls upon him, praying for the enduement of power upon the ministry, for the sanctification of believers and the Church, and for the salvation of a dying world.

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